

John Lennon : Paul McCartney : George Harrison : Ringo Starr

Special thanks: Yoko Ono Lennon and Olivia Harrison

Executive Producer: Jeff Jones

Project Producers: Jonathan Clyde and Guy Hayden

Original Album and Sessions recordings:
Production: George Martin
Orchestrations: George Martin
Additional Production: Chris Thomas
Principal Engineers: Ken Scott and Geoff Emerick at EMI Recording Studios and Barry Sheffield at Trident Studios

Additional Engineers: Richard Lush, Phillip McDonald, John Smith, Mike Sheady, Ken Townsend, Martin Benge, Jerry Boys, Peter Bown, Nick Webb, Dave Harries, Jeff Jarratt, Neil Richmond. JP Sen/SN Gupta for 'The Inner Light' at HMV Studios, India

Esher Demos:
Production by The Beatles

2018 Mixes:
Producer: Giles Martin
Mix Engineer: Sam Okell
Stereo Mastering Engineer: Miles Showell
5.1 Mastering Engineer: Tim Young
Transfer Engineer: Matthew Cocker
Mix Assistants: Matt Mysko, Stefano Civetta, Paul Pritchard and Greg McAlister
Audio Restoration: James Clarke
Esher Demos and Sessions tracks mixed by Giles Martin
Sessions Stereo Mastering Engineer: Alex Wharton
Project Management: Adam Sharp
Archive Tape Research: Kevin Howlett, Mike Heatley

Art Director: Darren Evans
Photo Editing and Research: Aaron Bremner and Dorcas Lynn
Copy Editor: Steve Tribe

Blu-ray Production: Trish McGregor
Blu-ray Authoring: Rich Osborn at Type 40

Thanks: Cary Anning, Adam Barker, Steve Cooke, Sonita Cox, Orla Lee Fisher, Lucy Launder, Alex Myers, Ian Pickavance, Jack Thomson, Garth Tweedale and all at Apple Corps





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The BEATLES

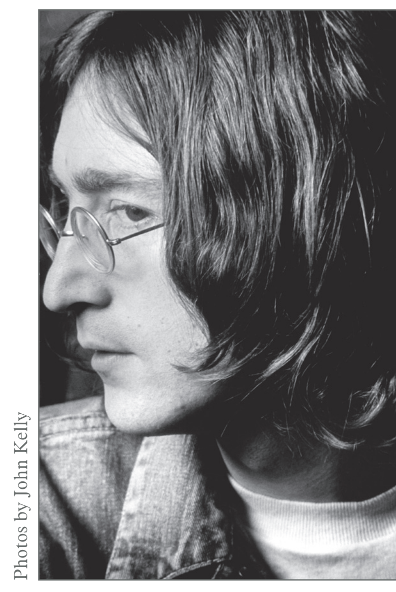
22.11.1968

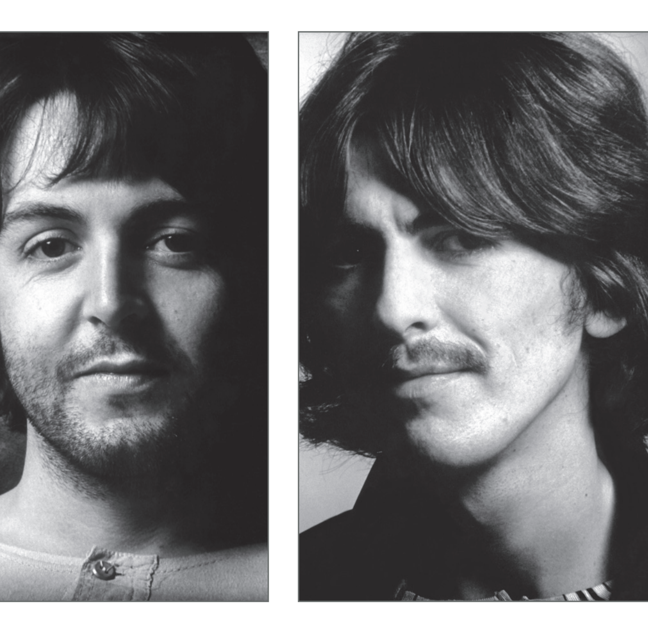


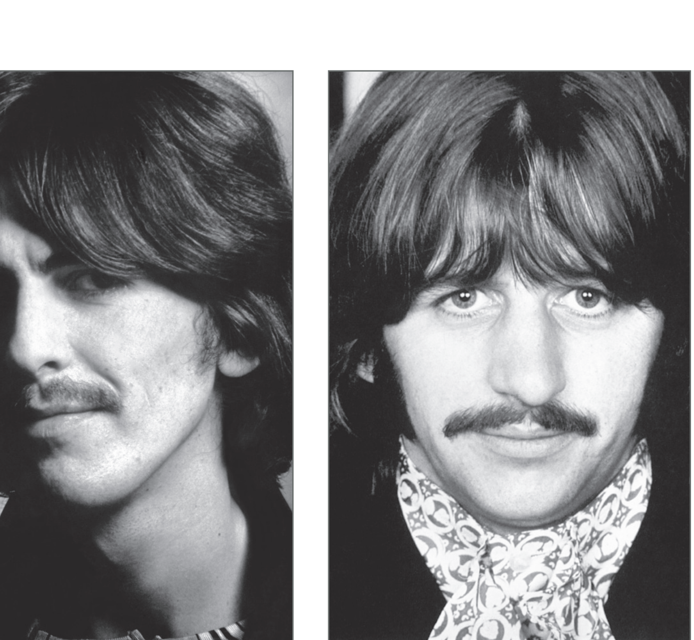


Photos by John Kelly









The BEATLES

22.11.1968



Photo by Linda McCartney

Paul McCartney

We, The Beatles

03.07.2018

By the time we, The Beatles, came to make what would come to be known as 'The White Album', we had travelled literally and figuratively thousands of miles and for over 10,000 hours. From our simple (not humble – we were hardly ever that!) beginnings in Liverpool we had played in many, many countries and been exposed to all sorts of different cultures. Our songs had developed from basic three-chord wonders into quite sophisticated compositions, and back again. The tensions arising in the world around us – and in our own world – had their effect on our music but, the moment we sat down to play, all that vanished and the magic circle within a square that was The Beatles was created. The diversity of the music on 'The White Album' somehow came together as a whole with 'Blackbird' and 'Yer Blues' sitting easily alongside 'While My Guitar Gently Weeps' and 'Helter Skelter'. We had left Sgt. Pepper's band to play in his sunny Elysian Fields and were now striding out in new directions without a map.

In the early days of the band we would often travel from London back to Liverpool. I remember one occasion when England was in the grip of heavy snowstorms. We were making our way home in our transit van with our trusty roadie, Mal, at the wheel. The road ahead was blanked out by the blizzard and all we could see were the tracks of the vehicles ahead of us. Mal swerved and suddenly we were sliding sideways down a slippery embankment. Luckily, the van didn't roll over and we slithered to a halt twenty yards below the main road. We jumped out, not knowing what to do, and stood in a circle. One of us said, 'What are we going to do now?' and another of us (I can't remember who) replied, 'Something will happen.' And sure enough – it did!



Photo by Linda McCartney

Giles Martin

Introduction

03.07.2018

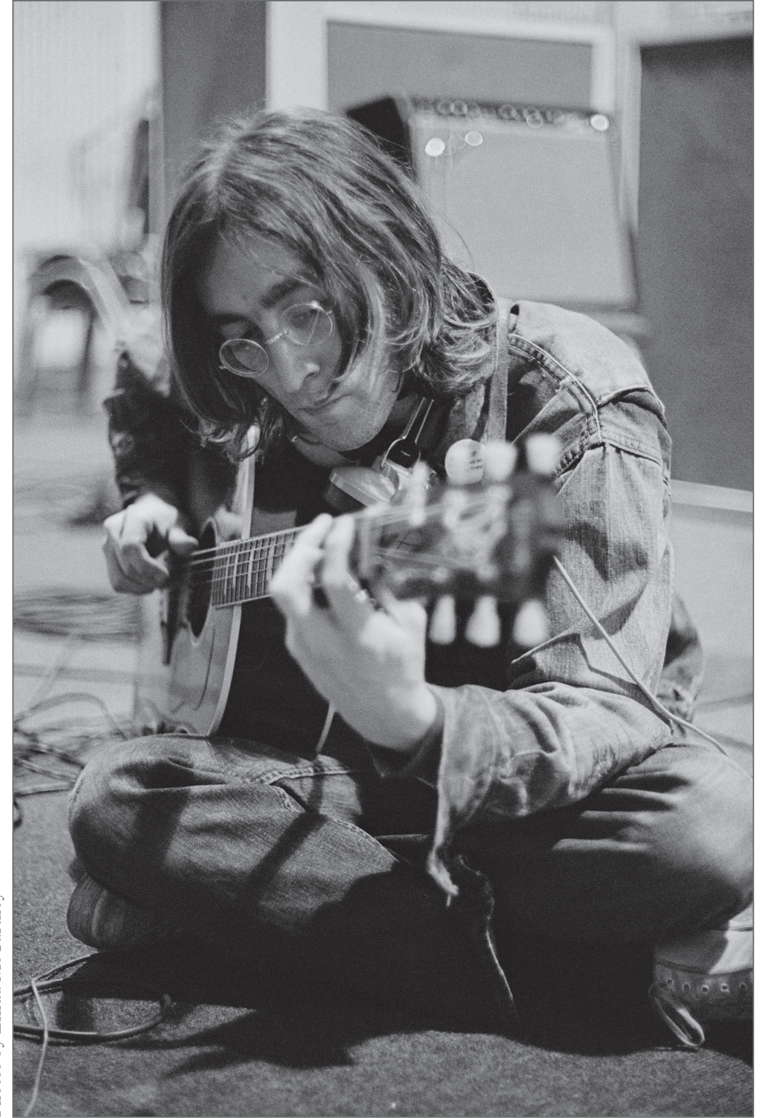
The way I see it, the tragic death of manager Brian Epstein, on 27 August 1967, triggered the opportunity for The Beatles to make a record like 'The White Album'. Suddenly, the man who had held the reins and guided their career was gone. Significantly, my father, George Martin, no longer had an equal in The Beatles' camp with whom he could devise strategies for album content and single releases.

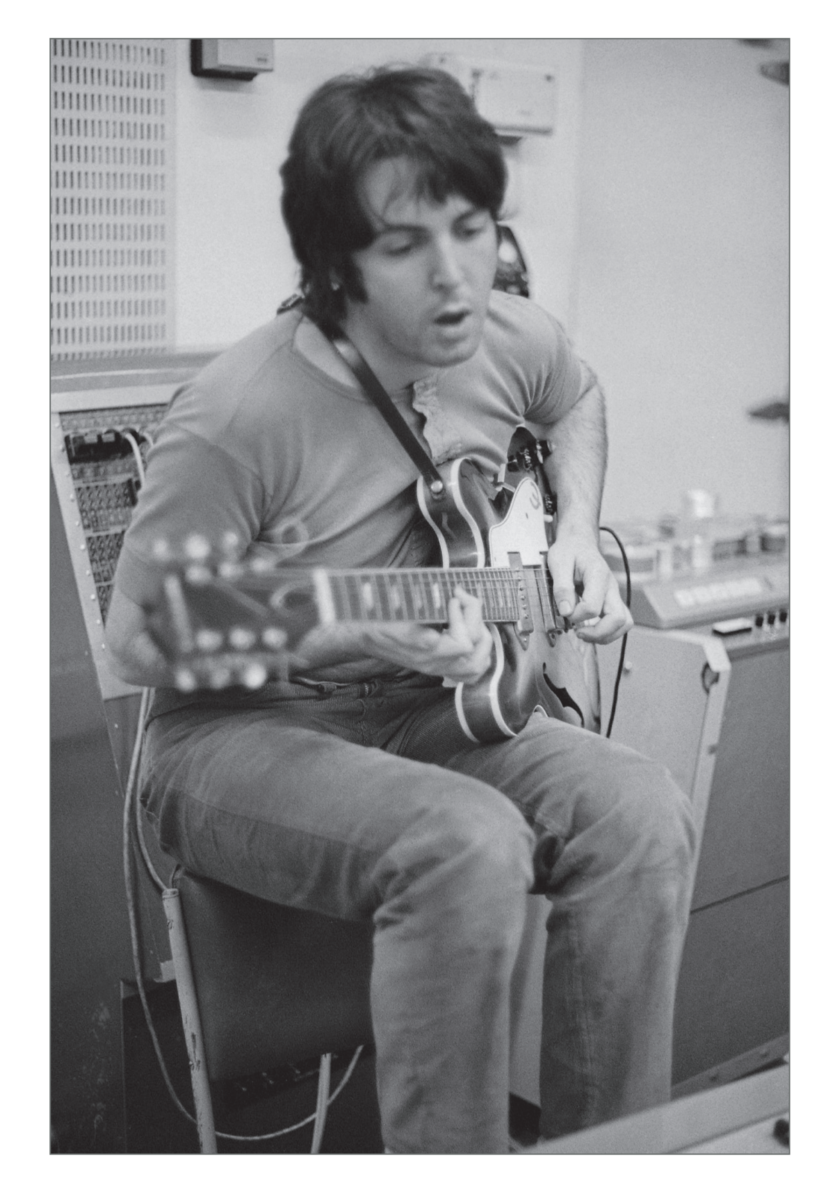
Whenever anyone mentioned to my dad that 'The White Album' was their favourite Beatles record, he would grimace. Not because he disliked the album, it was more due to the fact that the recording sessions for it had been so different to previous Beatles albums. In 1968, he lost the classroom. The concise preparation and tightly organised process of recording for *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* in 1967 had disappeared; song development in the studio and experimentation through multiple takes became customary. It was impossible for him to keep up with the relentless drive and prolific output of The Beatles. It required punishingly long hours, sometimes in different studios at the same time with various members of the group. Fortunately, my father had been astute enough to employ a young assistant producer, the now legendary Chris Thomas, to help steer the ship.

Many have assumed that there was a weakening of the bonds between The Beatles during the making of 'The White Album' and that they preferred to work apart from each other with little collaboration. This is simply not true. It is clear from listening to the tapes that their collective spirit and inventiveness were, in fact, stronger than ever. Following the development of a recording from an early take to a final production master, you hear how, as all four worked tirelessly together in the studio, they carved out a sound and 'feel' for each song. On the many tapes that have been carefully preserved from the sessions, there is extraordinary inspiration – mixed with plenty of love and laughter.

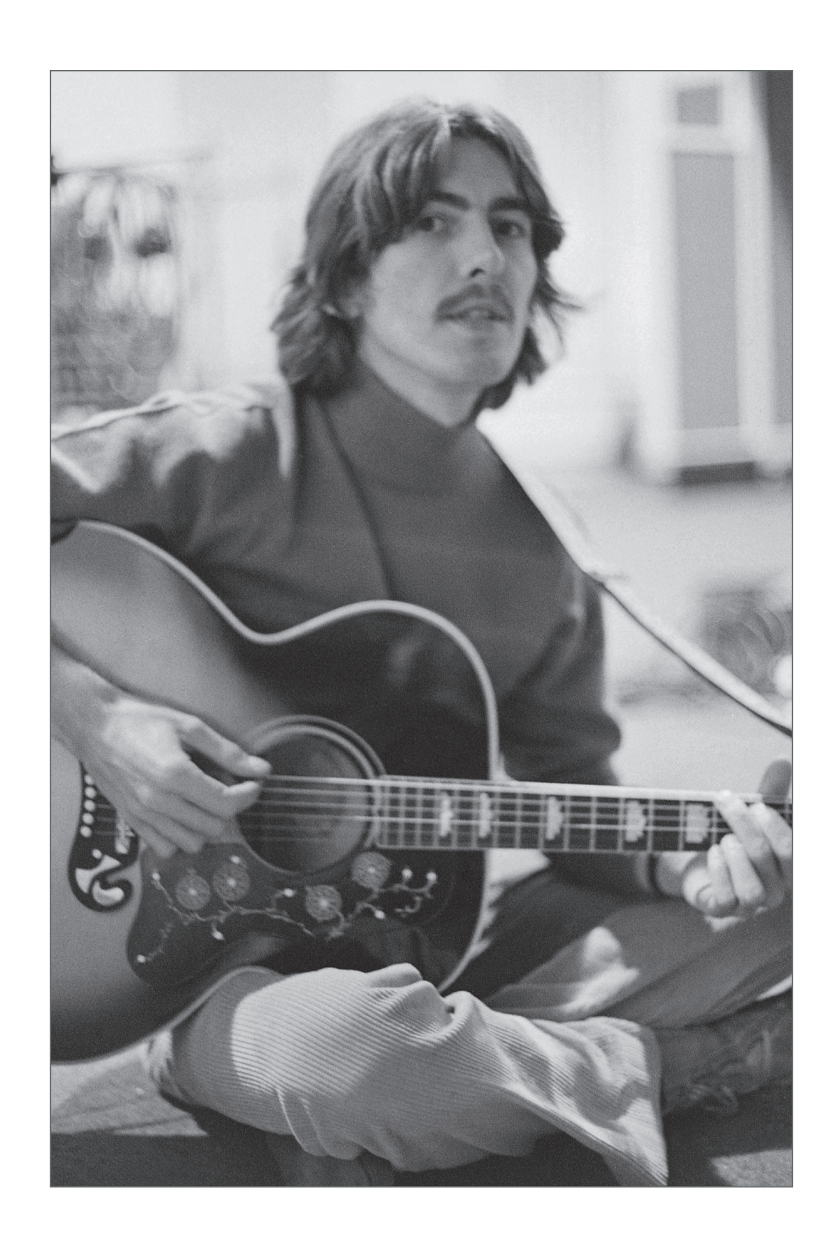
Admittedly, The Beatles' incessant work ethic wore down the studio staff at Abbey Road. Balance engineer Geoff Emerick left the project after recording nine songs and the incredible Ken Scott took his place at the mixing desk. The recordings themselves sound very different from *Sgt. Pepper*. I have the feeling the group allowed the engineers less time to sort out sounds in the studio, leading to the recordings being not quite so precise as before. The best way to explain it is to describe the tapes as sounding a little less 'hi-fi'. The full sound of *Sgt. Pepper* had been replaced by a far more visceral and energetic sound that has subsequently influenced so many artists and producers.

In remixing 'The White Album', we've tried to bring you as close as possible to The Beatles in the studio. We've peeled back the layers of the 'Glass Onion' with the hope of immersing old and new listeners into one of the most diverse and inspirational albums ever made. I hope you enjoy listening…





Photos by Linda McCartney



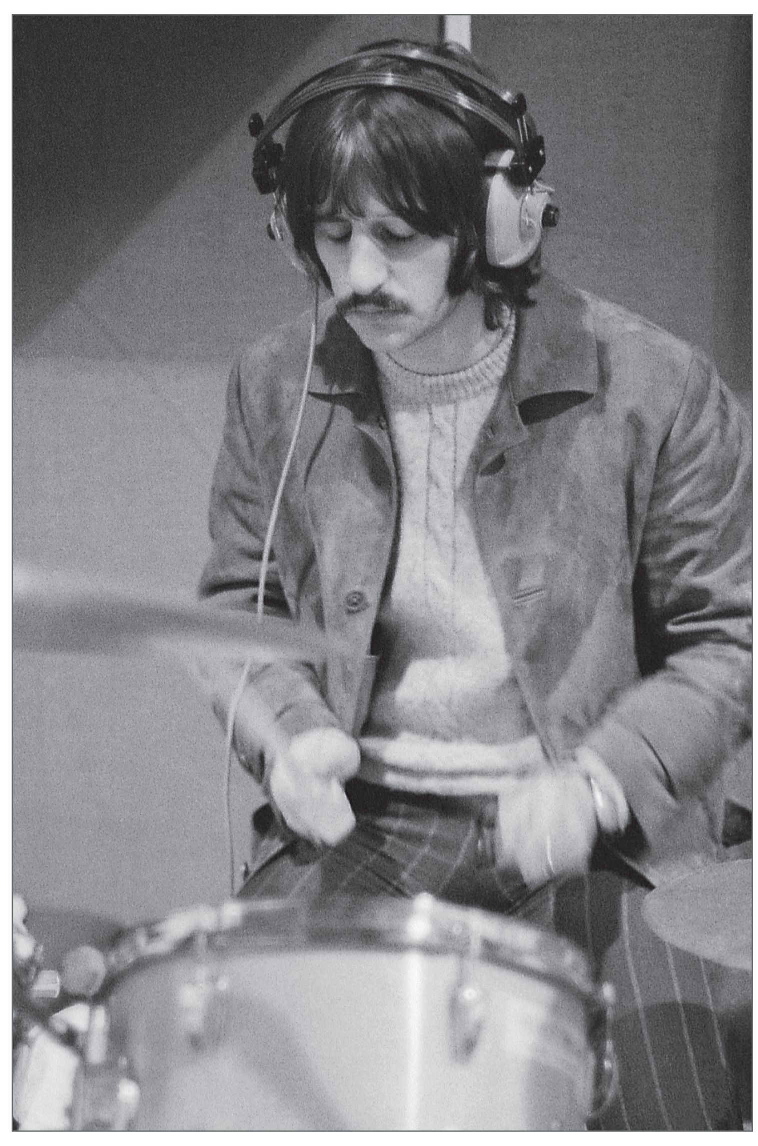




Photo by Dezo Hoffmann

Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band launch party

Kevin Howlett

The Way to White

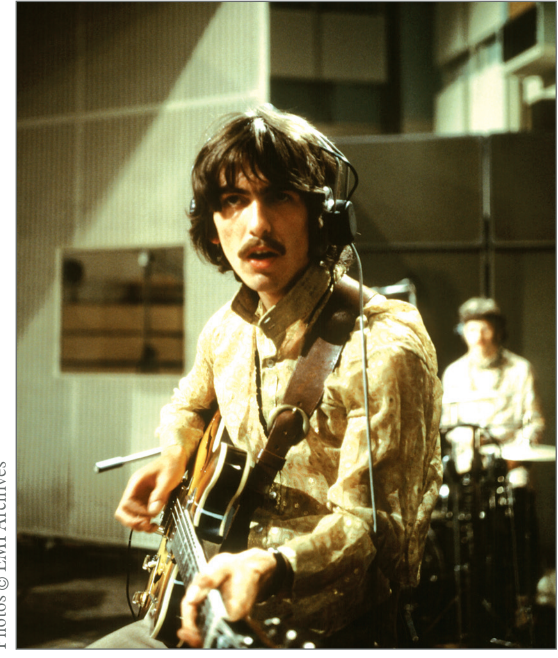
06.1967–05.1968

'The closest Western Civilisation has come to unity since the Congress of Vienna in 1815 was the week the *Sgt. Pepper* album was released.' That pithy observation by critic Langdon Winner is, of course, erudite hyperbole, but he was dazzled in June 1967 by the all-conquering reach of *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*. 'At the time I happened to be driving across the country on Interstate 80,' Winner wrote. 'In each city where I stopped for gas or food – Laramie, Ogallala, Moline, South Bend –the melodies wafted in from some far-off transistor radio or portable hi-fi. It was the most amazing thing I've ever heard.' This achievement marked a turnaround in the perception of The Beatles. After disappearing under the radar for three months, the group had resumed recording during the dark winter days at the close of 1966. This was a great relief for both their fans and executives at their record company EMI, who were fearful the group was about to fall apart. By the following summer, any anxiety about the future of The Beatles had been eliminated by the brilliance of their new work together. As Langdon Winner noted, 'For a brief while, the irreparably fragmented consciousness of the West was unified, at least in the minds of the young.'

As if that were not enough, within a few weeks, the omnipresence of *Sgt. Pepper* was augmented by a new song introduced by a landmark TV show. During the album sessions, The Beatles' manager Brian Epstein had received a letter, dated 28 February 1967, from the British Broadcasting Corporation. It outlined an ambitious programme idea to connect countries from across the globe by harnessing new developments in satellite TV communication. At first called *Round the World in Eighty Minutes*, the number of countries wishing to contribute material had increased its length to two hours. Consequently, the Jules Verne reference was jettisoned in favour of a pithier title: *Our World*. The BBC planned in one part of the programme to 'show man's greatest current achievements in the field of art and entertainment … e.g. we hope that France will offer us Picasso at work. Within this section we would like to offer from Britain the subject of the Beatles at work… in a recording studio actually making a disc.' Brian Epstein agreed arrangements for a worldwide TV audience to witness the group recording their next single. The coordinator of *Our World*, Aubrey Singer, received a telegram from BBC producer Derek Burrell-Davis on 17 May: 'Our World beat group in two hours meeting – aware challenge – enthusiastic actuality setting – responsive to world stage – writing new number with words such as Hello Love You Me Us Them We Together. Intend indicate Swinging London. Happening hoped for. Promise participate all rehearsals.'









What The Beatles had in mind was the colourful session that had taken place at Abbey Road to record the orchestral sections for 'A Day In The Life'. On 10 February, many of their friends from the Swinging London set had assembled in Studio One, including Mick Jagger, Brian Jones and Keith Richards from The Rolling Stones, Marianne Faithfull, Donovan, and Graham Nash of The Hollies. 'We had a lot of people there,' Paul told DJ Kenny Everett in May 1967. 'It was a big session and we wanted to make a "Happening" happen ... and it happened!' For the *Our World* broadcast from Studio One, The Beatles once again invited pop's 'beautiful people' to join in the fun. While The Beatles performed their new song, they were encircled by their flamboyantly dressed friends with placards translating its title – 'All You Need Is Love'.

A BBC press release had predicted that on 25 June 1967 'the world will take a step closer to Marshall McLuhan's concept of a "global village" as an estimated 500 million persons witness the first globe-girdling telecast in history.' This sunny optimism was clouded four days before the transmission when the Soviet Union refused to participate, citing its belief that Israeli activities in the Middle East were supported by the USA, the UK and West Germany. Arguing that this was contrary to the humanitarian spirit to be symbolised by *Our World*, the USSR withdrew – as did four contributing Eastern European states under its aegis: Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary and Poland. With Denmark swiftly added to the show to make a total of 14 participating countries, *Our World* was, nevertheless, seen by 350 million people on five continents.

'All You Need Is Love' was offered as an anthem of hope at a time of widespread unrest and conflict throughout the world. Cities in the USA were burning during race riots, and American involvement in the Vietnam War continued to escalate; as Ringo reflected, 'for that show, the writers of the song were masters at hitting the nail on the head.' 'Because of the mood of the time, it seemed to be a great idea to perform *that* song,' George recalled. 'While everybody else was showing people knitting in Canada and Irish clog dancers in Venezuela, we thought, "Well, we'll just sing 'All You Need Is Love', because it's a subtle bit of PR for God, basically."'

When the programme eventually switched over to The Beatles at EMI Recording Studios, it seemed, 'at least in the minds of the young', that the UK was at the epicentre of everything that was important and exciting. Yet some comments uncovered in a BBC Audience Research Report from this time reveal that not everyone approved: 'Surely this isn't the image of what we are like?' 'We did not do ourselves justice.' 'What a dreadful impression they must have given the rest of the world – I hope they do not think this is typical.' But within the spheres of pop music and youth culture, the satellite broadcast confirmed The Beatles as their indisputable leaders. During the summer of 1967, around the globe, 'All You Need Is Love' was a number one single and *Sgt. Pepper* was the top album.

From that peak of popularity and influence, The Beatles faced the challenge of what to do next. One project was already under way. A contract with United Artists had given the company the rights to distribute three films featuring the group. Following *A Hard Day's Night* and *Help!*, producer Walter Shenson had looked in vain for a suitable script for a third movie. Meanwhile, animated likenesses of John, Paul, George and Ringo had been seen on American television since September 1965. The Beatles themselves were not involved in these cartoon episodes. Their voices were mimicked by actors. The producer of the TV shows, Al Brodax, was eager to make a full-length film version of the hit series and, eventually, he secured an agreement. The creation of an animated adventure based on the 1966 hit 'Yellow Submarine' would, it was hoped, fulfil The Beatles' contractual obligation to United Artists. By summer 1967, *Yellow Submarine* was in production and The Beatles had already supplied three unreleased songs for the film to accompany older material. Directed by George Dunning with art direction by Heinz Edelmann, the innovative animation was an expression of the psychedelic spirit of *Sgt. Pepper*.

Another venture was also developing in this period. On the back of the sleeve of *Sgt. Pepper*, the LP's cover design was credited to M.C. Productions and The Apple – the first mention of a name that was soon associated with several ambitious schemes running alongside The Beatles' own music. The scope of Apple would encompass the release of records, films, music publishing and other grand enterprises. The first evidence of this commercial gambit was the Apple Boutique, which opened in Baker Street, London, on 7 December 1967. The shop's manager was Pete Shotton, an original member of John's pre-Beatles skiffle group, The Quarry Men. A report on the opening party in *The Beatles Book Monthly* concluded with the caveat, 'Pete asked me to point out that the shop doesn't only stock hippy-gear, there are stacks of clothes for every modern mind.' Dutch artists Simon and Marijke Postuma, known as The Fool, painted florid murals both inside the boutique and on the outside of the building. The myriad activities of Apple consumed draining amounts of The Beatles' time and energy in the years to come.

In the aftermath of the impact made with their summer LP and single releases, however, the two most significant events to influence what The Beatles did next occurred within days of each other in August 1967. They had all taken the hallucinogenic LSD but, led by George, the group began to seek an alternative spiritual dimension to their lives. 'My heart was still in India. That was the big thing for me when that happened in '66,' George recalled. When he learned that Maharishi Mahesh Yogi would be lecturing in London, he decided to attend. 'I had got to the point where I thought I would like to meditate. I'd read about it and I knew I needed a mantra – a password to get through into the other world. As we always seemed to do everything together, John and Paul came with me.' After a long meeting with the Maharishi at the end of his lecture on Thursday 24 August, they resolved to join his residential course on Transcendental Meditation starting the next day in Bangor, North Wales. While they were there, on Sunday 27 August 1967, The Beatles' world was knocked out of orbit when they learned of the sudden death of their manager Brian Epstein. Interviewed about the shocking news, George revealed that 'as much as we learned about spiritualism and things of that nature, we tried to pass on to him [Brian] and he was as equally interested as we are – as everybody should be.' John added that, 'Meditation gives you confidence enough to withstand something like this, even the short amount we've had.'

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The Beatles left Bangor on that sad day, resolved to resume their studies later with Maharishi Mahesh Yogi in India, but uncertain of how their careers would be managed in the future. At Paul's urging, it was decided that before they rejoined the Maharishi, the group must forge ahead with a project first discussed five months previously. One of their friends from the London counterculture scene, Barry Miles, had been present at the initial meeting about a film to be called *Magical Mystery Tour*: '*Sgt. Pepper* hadn't yet been released, but they were already moving on to the next thing. Paul and Brian Epstein had a number of papers in front of them and they were planning who would do what in a film. It's such a shame, of course, that Epstein died because otherwise many of the technical problems, which did bedevil the *Magical Mystery Tour* film, wouldn't have happened. For instance, Brian would have thought of hiring a film studio ahead of time, rather than at the very last minute.' Location shooting was completed in two weeks during September, but the film editing took much longer than the group had anticipated. A trip to India scheduled for October had to be postponed.

In the UK, the colour film devised, written and directed by The Beatles was first broadcast by BBC One in black and white on 26 December 1967 and then shown ten days later in colour on BBC Two. Only a very small audience viewed *Magical Mystery Tour* in colour, because most households could not afford to hire, let alone buy, a very expensive colour TV set. Consequently, the blurring in monochrome of some visual effects might have contributed to the bafflement and disappointment experienced by many viewers and journalists. On the other hand, they may simply have been expecting some cosy jollity for Christmas, not an experimental fantasy. 'They were looking for the plum-pudding special … and they very much didn't get it!' Paul remembers. Preceding *Magical Mystery Tour* on Boxing Day was a variety show hosted by Petula Clark; it was followed by a film starring comedian Norman Wisdom called *The Square Peg*. 'We were giving it to the young kids,' Paul declared. 'Why shouldn't they see something far out?' George's view was more jaundiced. 'The press hated it, because once they've built you up high, all they can do is knock you down again. With all the success that we had, every time something came out – a new record or whatever – they'd all try to slam it. That's what happens. That's life.' 'Magic Leaves Beatles With Almighty Flop' and 'Beatles Mystery Tour Baffles Viewers' were the verdicts of the *Daily Express* and *Daily Mirror*.

The opinions of the BBC's Viewing Panel mostly reflected the negative comments of the press. 'They could hardly find a good word to say for the programme,' an Audience Research Report revealed, 'considering it stupid, pretentious rubbish which was, no doubt, intended to be very clever and "way out" but which was, they thought, a complete jumble with neither shape nor meaning, and certainly no entertainment value whatsoever.' One viewer judged it to be 'positively the worst programme I can remember seeing on any TV channel.' Nevertheless, at a time when there were only three TV networks to choose between, The Beatles' film attracted a viewing figure equivalent to a quarter of the population of the UK; and there was enthusiasm for it too, at least in the minds of the young. A schoolboy told the BBC that it was 'one

Photo by John Kelly



of the best Christmas programmes we have had for a long time. The idea was clever as well as original. It was very funny in parts.' The film has continued to find supporters and detractors ever since.

The music recorded for *Magical Mystery Tour*, including 'The Fool On The Hill' and 'I Am The Walrus', was as popular and adventurous as ever. 'The Beatles are at it again,' reported *New Musical Express*, 'stretching pop music to its limits on beautiful sound canvasses, casting wonderful spells beyond the clouds to turn the dullest plastic disc into a magical mystery tour of sounds fantastic, sounds unbelievable!' Always reluctant to duplicate tracks on albums and singles, in the UK The Beatles released their latest material in an unusual format – a double EP – with three songs on each seven-inch disc. Its gatefold sleeve included a 24-page booklet that was enlarged for an LP devised by Capitol Records for North America, where EPs were no longer considered viable. Judged purely on a commercial basis, Capitol's decision to compile an album from all the 1967 Beatles tracks that were not included on *Sgt. Pepper* was certainly vindicated. By mid January 1968, the American sales figure for the LP had reached 1.75 million. However, The Beatles and British record buyers did not consider *Magical Mystery Tour* to be the official follow-up to *Sgt. Pepper*. That was expected to arrive in 1968.

Having fulfilled his Beatles duties for 1967, George worked on a soundtrack for the film *Wonderwall*. His love of Indian music had started to develop in 1965 and, with no imposed limitations on what he provided for the film, George could follow his heart. His boldest move, unprecedented for a pop musician at this time, was to travel to the source of the music that so fascinated him and record there. Sessions for the film soundtrack took place in an EMI-affiliated studio in Bombay (now Mumbai) between 9 and 13 January 1968. The instrumental backing for George's song 'The Inner Light' was also recorded in that time. Once vocals were added in London, the song was released in March on the B-side of 'Lady Madonna' – The Beatles' follow-up to their very successful Christmas chart-topper, 'Hello, Goodbye'. After five days of work in early February, The Beatles had completed both sides of their new single and recorded two other songs for future use. They were now, at last, free to fly to India to join a course at the Maharishi's 'Academy of Transcendental Meditation' in Shankaracharya Nagar, Rishikesh. 'I think there was a little bit of emptiness in our souls, a lack of spiritual fulfilment,' Paul later commented.

In the 50 years since their time in India, various flippant remarks, rumours and journalistic scepticism have tended to undermine the reality of how seriously The Beatles approached their studies there. They were very impressed by the Maharishi and his teachings. At the age of 40, in 1958, the guru had started to travel the world to expound his message. In 1961, he gave a lecture at the Royal Albert Hall in London and appeared on BBC television. By the time The Beatles had each been initiated by receiving a personal mantra from the Maharishi, he had already attracted a significant number of followers. Explaining why to reporters at Bangor, the Maharishi stated that Transcendental Meditation gave people 'insight into life. They begin

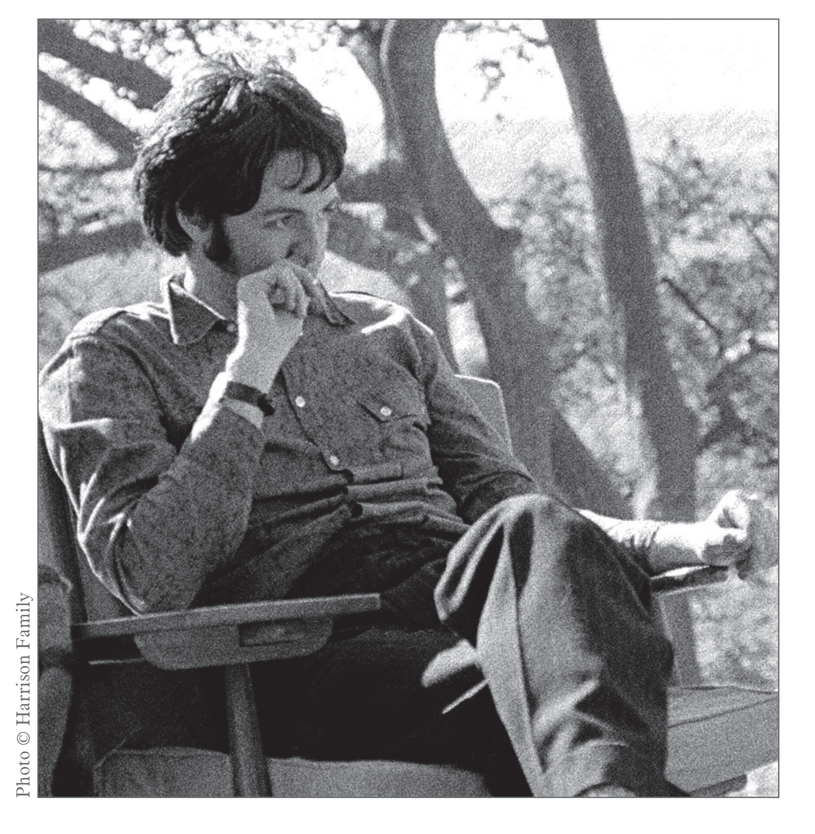
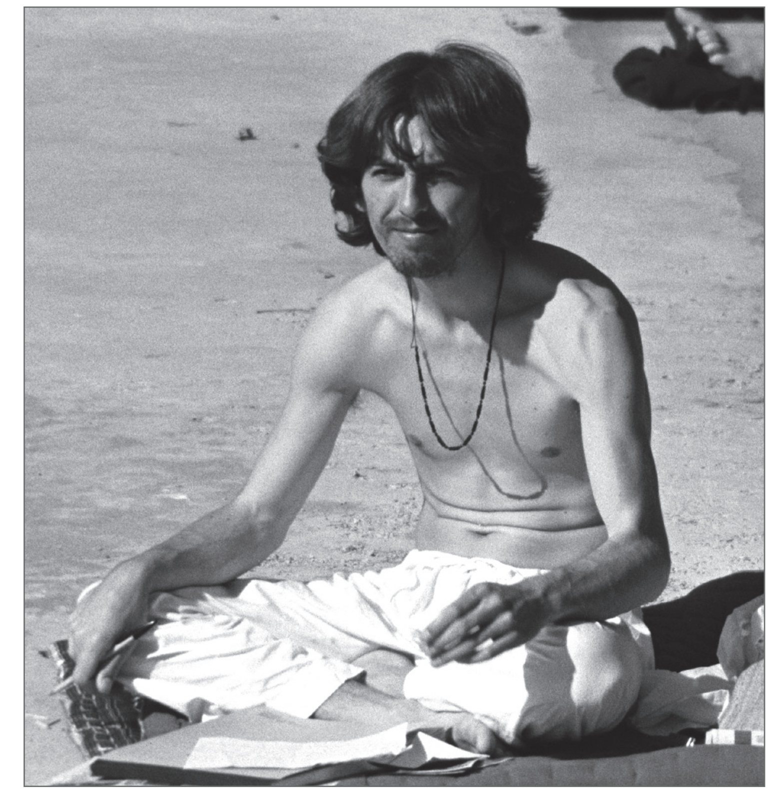
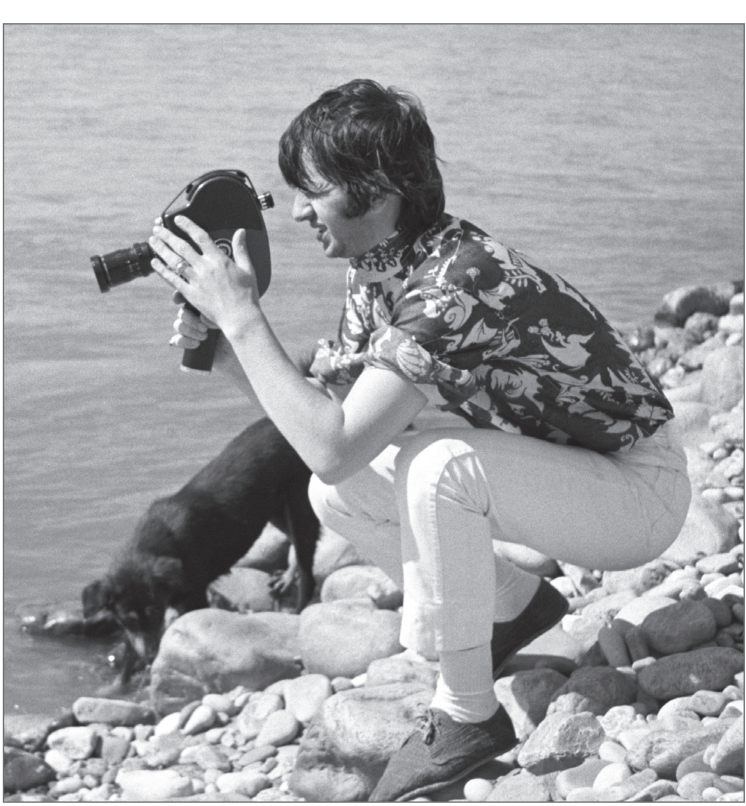


Photo © Harrison Family





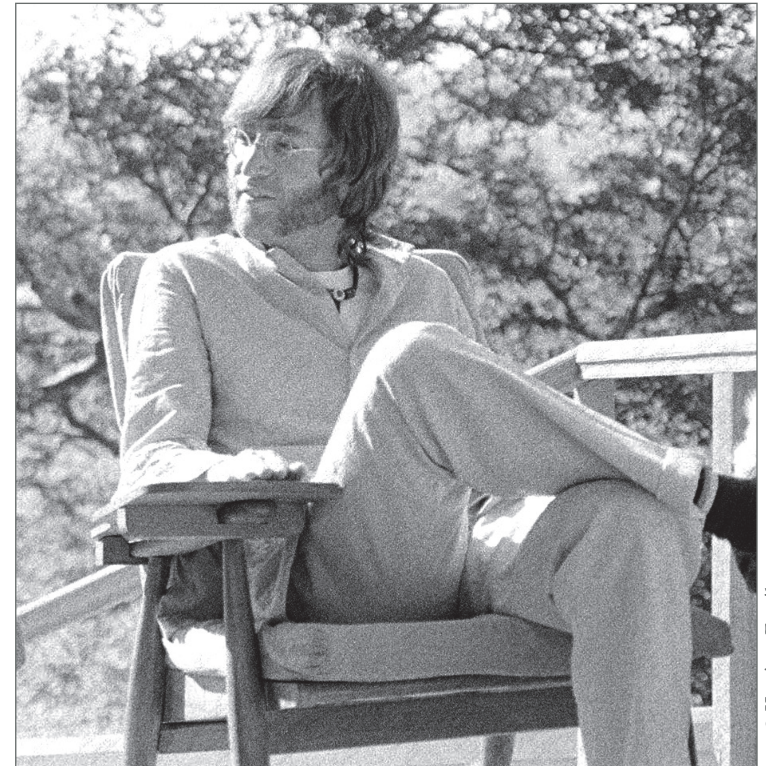


Photo © Harrison Family

to enjoy all peace and happiness. Because this has been the message of all the saints in the past, they call me "saint".' Asked about The Beatles, he described them as 'very intelligent and young men of great potential in life … they'll be the leaders for the next coming generation to spread the message of peace and harmony.'

John and George began to fulfil that hope when they appeared with David Frost on his chat show *The Frost Report* on consecutive editions in September and October 1967. 'If just one in every thousand viewers who watched the programme was encouraged to look into Transcendental Meditation then it was well worth doing,' John believed. 'We want to get the message across to as many people as possible that meditation can help everyone.' Significantly, both he and George saw the practice as a replacement for the mind-altering drugs that had been a part of The Beatles' lifestyle. 'Drugs don't really get to the true you, the real self,' George told David Frost. 'The way to approach the real you is through meditation or some form of Yoga.' John added: 'We dropped drugs long before we met the Maharishi. There was no going any further. That was more associated with finding out about yourself and your ego. Meditation is a bit more gentle and much deeper.' Eager to start their studies, John and George were the first to leave London, boarding a flight to Delhi on 15 February 1968.

Paul, with fiancée Jane Asher, and Ringo, with his wife Maureen, reached Rishikesh four days after the arrival of John and George, who had travelled with their wives Cynthia and Pattie. Paul recalls that 'John and George were going to Rishikesh with the idea that this might be some spiritual lift-off and they might never come back if Maharishi told them some really amazing thing. I thought I'll give it a month, then if I really, really like it, I'll come back.' Furthermore, Jane Asher had a deadline for returning, because she had rehearsals scheduled for her role in *L'Été* ('Summer') at the Fortune Theatre in London. Ringo and Maureen were the first to come home. 'The food was impossible for me because I'm allergic to so many different things,' Ringo explained. 'I took two suitcases with me, one of clothes and the other full of baked beans. We came home because we missed the children. I wouldn't want anyone to think we didn't like it there. I said it was like Butlin's holiday camp; we had learnt by then you could say anything and they'd print it. It was a good experience – it just didn't last as long for me as it did for them.'

Just as riding together on the magic bus in the English West Country had maintained the unity of the group in the fallout from the death of Brian Epstein, living with each other in the peaceful ashram in Rishikesh also helped to reinforce their fellowship. Their ever-present fixer, Mal Evans, had flown out ahead of them and was there throughout their stay. He wrote in *The Beatles Book Monthly* that 'we had a very pleasant surprise when we saw the high standard of the accommodation. It had been luxuriously done out. In many ways the food was quite like anything you'd get in a typical European hotel, with very cheerful waiters to serve it. The vegetarian diet satisfied John and George who gave up eating meat a long time ago. The room service was marvellous.' He described a typical day starting early with meditation, followed by breakfast at seven. 'After breakfast we'd meditate for as long as we wanted. There were no hard and fast rules, everything was free and easy.'

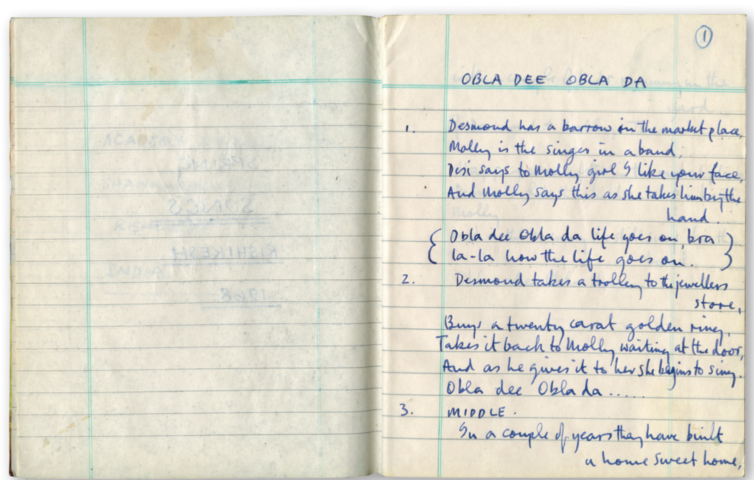
The Beatles' contingent mixed with TM students from different countries and walks of life, whether it be film star Mia Farrow or Mike and Paul, two Lancashire lads who had hitchhiked to India and were earning their keep by working in the kitchen. Mal arranged a 25th birthday celebration for George on 25 February, featuring a firework display, garlands of flowers and a cake with 'Jai Guru Deva' in gold letters on white icing. In addition to their daily meditation and occasional sightseeing trips, there were many relaxed jam sessions with musicians Mike Love of The Beach Boys, Donovan and his friend Gypsy Dave, and jazz flautist Paul Horn. Mal had found a new sitar in Delhi for George, and the group had brought acoustic guitars. The atmosphere proved ideal for writing songs. 'Paul must have done about a dozen. George says he's got six and I wrote fifteen,' John recalled. 'Because we were in India and only had our guitars there, they have a different feel about them.' 'I wrote quite a few songs and John came up with some creative stuff,' Paul recalls. 'I remember talking about the next album and George was quite strict. He'd say, "We're not here to talk music – we're here to meditate." "Oh, yeah, all right."' Reflecting on 'The White Album', George did acknowledge that 'The experience of India was all embodied in that album. When we came back, it became apparent that there were more songs than would make up a single album.' In a postcard John sent from India to 'Rick Starr', he told Ringo: 'we've got about two L.P.s worth of songs now so get your drums out.'

The Beatles' time in Rishikesh was a refreshing respite from the distractions of life at home and, as it turned out, a peaceful way to prepare for their next recordings. However, the departure of John and George from the ashram was sudden and emotionally strained. The song details in this book for 'Sexy Sadie' – John's angry putdown of the Maharishi – reveal more about why they left in a hurry. George subsequently dismissed an allegation of sexual misconduct by the Maharishi, which had triggered John's fury, as a rumour that was 'total bullshit'. What may have more credence in explaining The Beatles' sudden disconnection from the Maharishi is the guru's desire to have the group act as financial sponsors and promotional agents for his Spiritual Regeneration movement. Even in 1967, there had been unease about his spoken word album displaying on the back of its sleeve the message 'the Beatles' spiritual teacher speaks to the youth of the world on Love and the untapped source of Power that lies within'. The Beatles had for a time thought about making a documentary about the Maharishi. Once they changed their minds about that project, John and George spent their last hours in Rishikesh dodging a film crew that had arrived from the USA. John, Cynthia, George, Pattie and her sister Jenny Boyd left the puzzled Maharishi on 12 April 1968. 'I have never packed my belongings with such a heavy heart,' Cynthia remembered. 'I felt what we were doing was wrong, very, very wrong.'



ACADEMY OF MEDITATION.
SHANKARACHARYA NAGAR
RISHIKESH
INDIA.

SPRING
SONGS.
RISHIKESH.
1968.



(1)

OBLA DEE OBLA DA

1. Desmond has a barrow in the market place,
Molly is the singer in a band,
Desi says to Molly girl I like your face,
And Molly says this as she takes him by the hand.
{ Obla dee Obla da life goes on, bra
la-la how the life goes on. }
2. Desmond takes a trolley to the jewellers store,
Buys a twenty carat golden ring,
Takes it back to Molly waiting at the door,
And as he gives it to her she begins to sing.
Obla dee Obla da .....
3. MIDDLE.
In a couple of years they have built a home sweet home,

(2)

with a couple of kids running in the yard
of Desmond + Molly Jones....
Happy ever after in the market place
Desmond lets the children lend a hand,
Molly
And in the evening she still sings it in the band,
Obla-dee Obla da ....

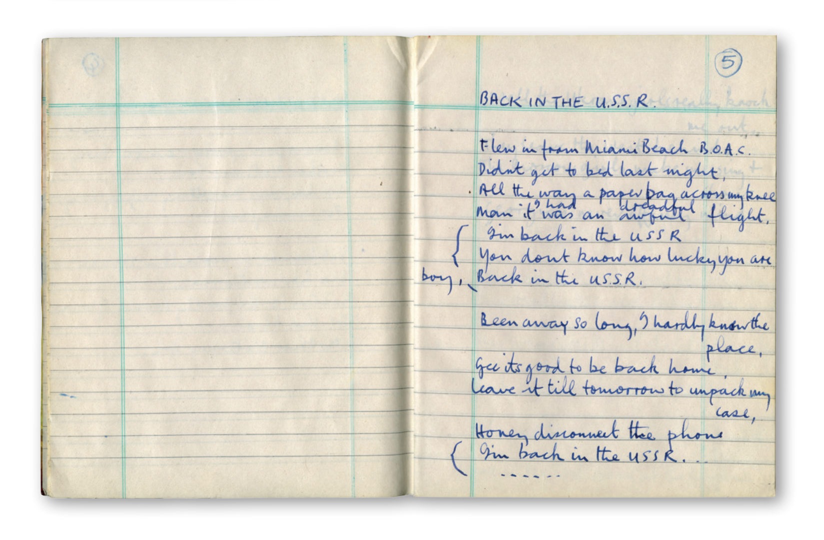
(3)

MOTHER NATURES SON.

1. Born a poor young country boy
Mother Natures son,
All day long I'm sitting singing songs
For everyone.

2. Sit beside a mountain stream
See her waters run,
Listen to the pretty sound of music
As she flies....
Mother Natures son

(4)



(5)

BACK IN THE U.S.S.R.

Flew in from Miami Beach B.O.A.C.
Didnt get to bed last night,
All the way a paper bag across my knee
Man it was an awful flight. (above: had dreadful)
{ I'm back in the USSR
You dont know how lucky you are boy,
Back in the USSR.

Been away so long, I hardly know the place,
Gee its good to be back home,
Leave it till tomorrow to unpack my case,
Honey disconnect the phone
{ I'm back in the USSR..
.....

6

Well the Ukraine girls really knock
me out,
They leave the West behind,
The Moscow girls make me sing +
shout
Georgia's never off my mind.

7

ROCKY RACOON.

1. Rocky Racoon checked into his room
Only to find Gideon's bible.

2. Rocky had come, equipped with a gun,
To shoot off the legs of his rival.

3. His rival it seems had broken his dreams
By stealing the girl of his fancy.

4. Her name was McGill, she called herself
Lil.
But everyone knew her as Nancy.

5. She and her man, who called himself
Dan,
were in the next room at the hoedown,

8

6. Rocky burst in, + grinning a grin
Said Danny boy, this is a showdown.

7. Daniel was hot, he drew first + shot
+ Rocky collapsed in the corner.
SCREAM.... SOLO.....

9

JUNK.

1. Motor cars, handlebars, bicycles
for two
Broken hearted jubilee.

2. Parachutes, Army boots,
Sleeping bags

Buy, buy says the sign in the
shop window....
Why, why says the junk in the
yard.

11

HONEY PIE.

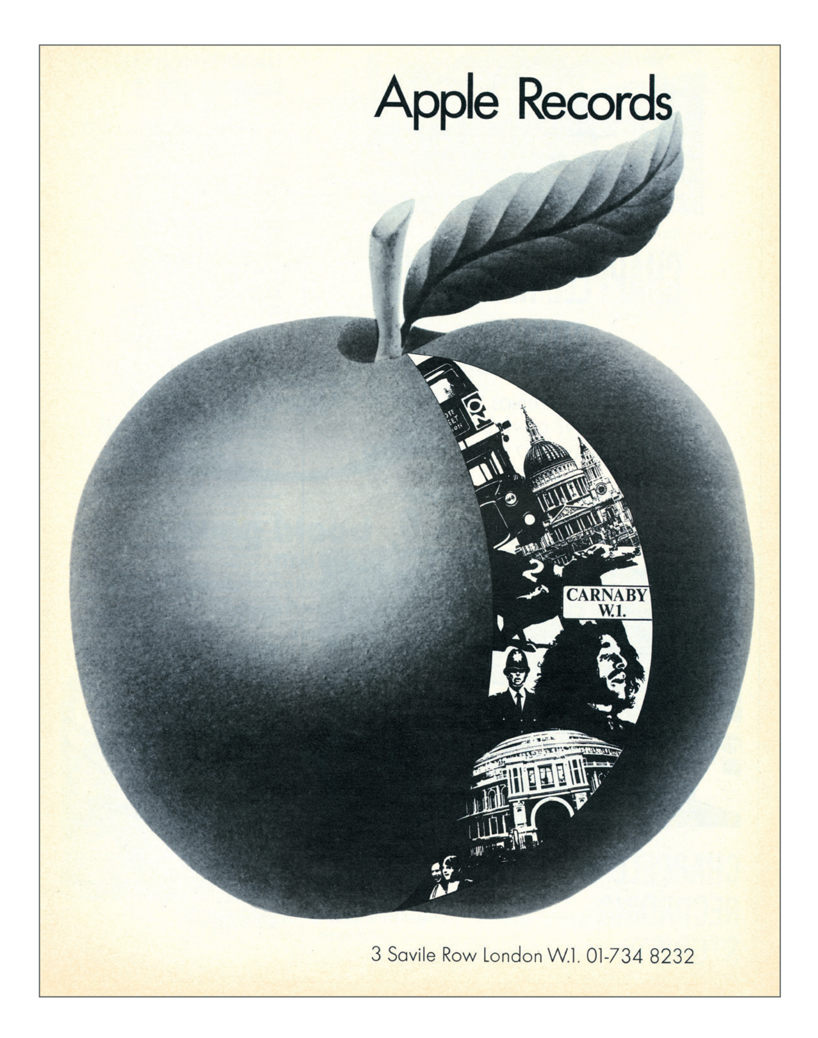
Joan was quizzical studied pataphysical
science in the home,
Late nights all alone with a test tube
no no no no...
Maxwell Edison majoring in medicine
called her on the phone.
Let me take you out to the pictures
Jo-o-o-o-oan.

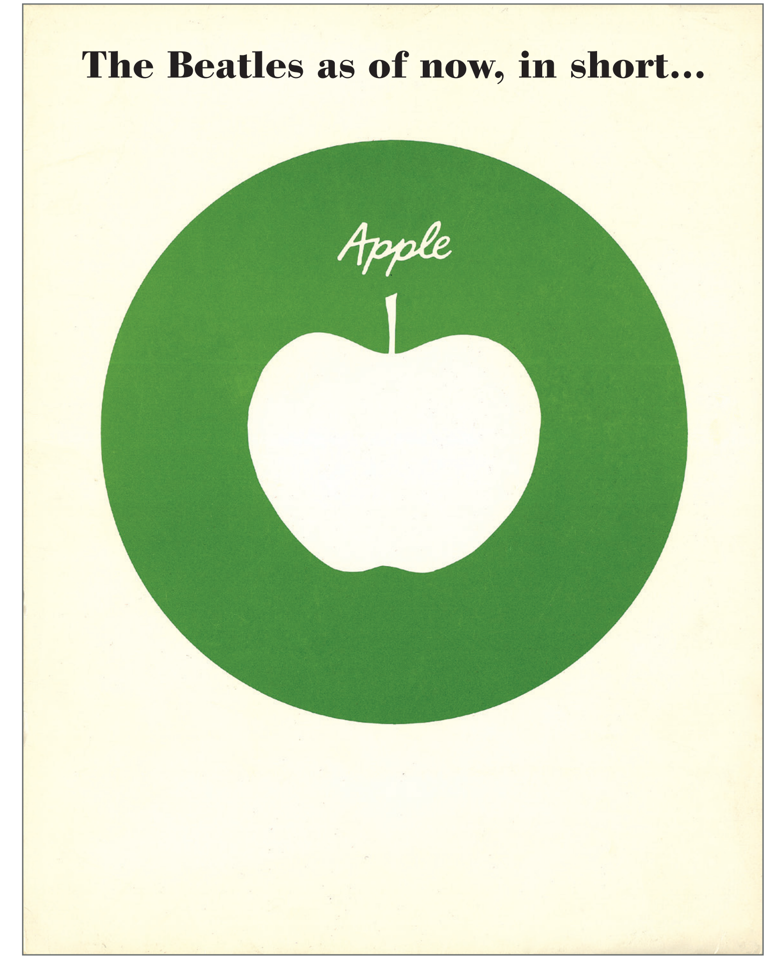
Honey Pie.

1 Honey Pie, you are driving me frantic
Sail across the Atlantic
To be where you belong.

2 Honey Pie my position is tragic
Come + show me the magic
Of your Hollywood song.

You became a legend of the silverscreen





John and Cynthia flew back to England. George had agreed to go to Madras to visit Ravi Shankar and so stayed in India until 21 April. He was to have been filmed with the sitar virtuoso for a documentary called *Raga*, but having become ill with dysentery was unable to take part at that time. Once Paul had returned from an Easter break at his farm in Scotland, on 11 May he and John flew to New York for five days to attend business meetings and announce to the press the formation of Apple Corps. 'We only came over here to plan it so we don't know too much about it yet,' Paul told reporters. On the day John and Paul appeared on *The Johnny Carson Show* in America, George and Ringo journeyed to the Cannes Film Festival for the world premiere of *Wonderwall*.

When all had returned from their travels, during the last week of May, The Beatles compiled acoustic demo versions of 27 songs at George's house in Esher, Surrey. Twenty-one of these were recorded in the subsequent studio sessions in 1968; 19 made it onto the White Album. 'We had hoped this time to do a lot of rehearsing before we reached the studio,' Paul told the *NME*. 'But as it happens, all we got was one day.' Significantly, when the group assembled a few days later on 30 May, there was a new addition to the small inner circle at EMI Recording Studios. John introduced Yoko Ono as his new partner, who would be constantly at his side. Having first met her in November 1966, John had become intrigued not only by Yoko's avant-garde art, but also by her off-beat thoughts expressed in regular letters he received in Rishikesh. In one, Yoko suggested, 'I'm a cloud. Watch for me.' 'I started thinking of her as a woman, not just an intellectual woman,' John remembered. Back at home, while Cynthia was on holiday with their son Julian in Greece, John and Yoko began their intense relationship on 19 May 1968. 'I knew immediately when I saw them together that they were right for each other,' Cynthia admitted. 'I knew I'd lost him.'

Compared to the summit The Beatles had reached on 25 June 1967 when *Sgt. Pepper* was in the air and 'All You Need Is Love' was bouncing around our world, almost a year later, the group began their next album in quite different circumstances. In trying to organise their financial affairs after the sudden loss of Brian Epstein, they had opted for the byzantine business of Apple Corps. Following the far-out fantasy of *Magical Mystery Tour* and the group's association with an Indian guru, there was once more public bewilderment about what on earth they were up to. For example, a newsreel for cinemas produced by Pathé News had reported on the group's communal passage to India, showing glimpses of The Beatles dressed in white behind the ashram's high wire fences. Its commentary implied that their fame had driven them to become recluses, hiding away in the Himalayas: 'The great screen star Greta Garbo used to crave solitude. In these days, it's even harder to come by, but The Beatles have found it … in the cool, clear air of Rishikesh.' In the Fan Club Newsletter published in the June 1968 edition of *The Beatles Book Monthly*, Freda Kelly seized the opportunity of 'killing one strange rumour which crops up in so many members' letters at the moment. The Beatles are NOT making records about meditation.'

In the time between their last album and the beginning of the sessions for its successor, pop music had been changing. Inspired by The Beatles' achievement with *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*, there was a heavier emphasis on the creation of an album. Throughout 1968, there were big sales for LPs by Big Brother & The Holding Company (*Cheap Thrills*), Cream (*Disraeli Gears* and *Wheels Of Fire*) Bob Dylan (*John Wesley Harding*), The Doors (*Strange Days* and *Waiting For The Sun*), The Jimi Hendrix Experience (*Are You Experienced?*, *Axis: Bold As Love* and *Electric Ladyland*), Simon & Garfunkel (*Bookends*) and The Small Faces (*Ogden's Nut Gone Flake*). These artists were breaking new ground with their innovative albums, while also selling large numbers of records. After the longest wait yet for The Beatles' next long player, there was widespread and heightened anticipation about whether it could possibly match the impact made, 18 months previously, by *Sgt. Pepper*.

Photo by Tony Bramwell



Meeting at Savile Row between Capitol Records and Apple, Summer 1968
L-R: Peter Asher, Ringo Starr, Ken Mansfield, Peter Brown, Derek Taylor,
George Harrison, Larry Delaney, Frankie Hart, Stan Gortikov, Jeremy Banks



Stereo test pressing of *The Beatles*

John Harris

Can You Take Me Back, Where I Came From?

22.11.1968

When I found ‘The White Album’, I grabbed it straight away.

There it was, near the front of the record rack in the public library, looking like a sleek and strange piece of perfection in among the visual clutter of everything else. To take it home for two weeks cost 25p. You could see what state a record was in from two pieces of card featuring small circles, on which the people in charge were meant to draw any scratches. This copy was apparently as clean as its pristine sleeve, so off I went to the counter, before returning home with my dad. It must have been 1979, or 1980; I was no older than ten.

I can recall the feeling of having no idea what I was about to experience. There was a copy of ‘The Blue Album’ – or, to use its proper title, *1967–1970* – at home, but that compilation offered only limited clues: ‘Back In The U.S.S.R.’, ‘Ob-La-Di, Ob-La-Da’, and ‘While My Guitar Gently Weeps’, which left 27 unknowns. Their titles, gracefully laid out on the left of this new discovery’s gatefold, were certainly beguiling: ‘The Continuing Story Of Bungalow Bill’; ‘Happiness Is A Warm Gun’; ‘Blackbird’; ‘Piggies’; ‘Everybody’s Got Something To Hide Except Me And My Monkey’; ‘Helter Skelter’; ‘Savoy Truffle’. But, unlike a lot of records, this one seemed to offer no further information, apart from those four separate black-and-white portraits.

John and Paul, I thought, looked dazed and tired. The inner sleeves, for some reason, were black. The accompanying posters and lyric sheets, I now realise, had long since been stolen. Straight away, I was certain these were not the same Beatles as the ones who had made *Sgt. Pepper*, let alone *Help!* and *A Hard Day’s Night*. So who had they turned into?

Some of the songs, it transpired, were seemingly straightforward, and instantly enjoyable. But others were as unsettling as the sleeve. Why did ‘Glass Onion’ suddenly stop for those weird strings? Why could I hear John’s voice wailing away in the instrumental coda of ‘Yer Blues’? What on earth had happened at the end of ‘Long, Long, Long’? ‘Helter Skelter’ was downright scary. So was ‘Cry Baby Cry’. The day after taking the album home, I sat through it all, and had my first experience of ‘Revolution 9’ – and I can still recall the mixture of bafflement and unease it triggered. Side four, I quickly concluded, was like some dark attic that you had to summon the courage to peer into, let alone explore.



Photo by Ethan A. Russell © Yoko Ono

Now, all this happened almost four decades ago, and I have since grown up a bit and come to know 'The White Album' inside out, as well as reading a great deal about its story. I now put on 'Helter Skelter' for fun, and have discovered that 'Revolution 9' enlivens long car journeys. The music doesn't freak me out quite as much as it used to, though I still think a lot of it retains a deep eeriness. But, forty years after I first heard it, the qualities most vividly highlighted anew by this fresh incarnation of 'The White Album' and the wealth of unearthed material that comes with it are a little more straightforward: its authors' almost supernatural creative gifts, and the way their music has endured with all of its magic still there to hear.

In the clichéd telling of The Beatles' story, this is the album that decisively captured the four of them breaking apart – though it also features extraordinary collective performances by a group who, whatever the tensions and pressures, were still united by an amazing internal bond. I now know that the music they made in 1968 reflected convulsive and often violent happenings that were taking place in the wider world. Equally importantly, 'The White Album' is probably the most glorious manifestation of the depth and breadth of the music The Beatles created: 30 songs, 93 minutes, and a whole world to get lost in.

Fifty years after it was created, as 'The White Album' plays, what do we hear? As much as anything, it embodies a sudden shift in rock music. Pop time moved fast in the 1960s and, after the peak of what we now know as psychedelia, 1968 was the year that the best music embraced a new simplicity. For some musicians, this was a matter of going back to rock 'n' roll's three-chord roots, or returning to folk, or the blues; in The Beatles' case, there was an element of all that, but their new-found emphasis on stripping things back and playing as a band also sparked new feats of imagination and creativity, as their music once again took an evolutionary leap.

One song in particular had taken the kind of orchestral, effects-laden, surreal aesthetic that had partly defined the previous year to its logical conclusion. 'I Am The Walrus', first released as the B-side of 'Hello, Goodbye' in November 1967, was a kind of artistic full stop: after you had combined violins, cellos, horns, clarinets, snatches of Shakespeare and a multitude of things besides into what the writer Ian MacDonald later called 'a damn-you-England tirade that blasts education, art, culture, law, order, class, religion and even sense itself', where else was there to go?

In the summer of 1967, Bob Dylan and the musicians who would soon be known as The Band had worked on the so-called 'Basement Tapes', full of pared-down songs that evoked what one writer would later call 'the old, weird America' – and which exerted their influence on musicians in America and Britain by being passed around on reels of tape and acetate records, which quickly led to a spate of cover versions. In December of the same year, Dylan released *John Wesley Harding*, an almost unbelievably sparse exploration of past American myth and the mysteries of the Bible; in July 1968, The Band would make their debut with the similarly restrained *Music From Big Pink*. As evidenced by its key role in Eric Clapton's decision to leave Cream and move in a much more primal direction, all this music fed into a rising sense of a return to rock's roots – confirmed at the end of 1968, when The Rolling Stones put out *Beggars Banquet*, an album partly influenced by 'The Basement Tapes',

Photo by Linda McCartney



and the mixture of mystery and musical purity at the heart of Dylan's latest creative turn.

The Beatles were admirers of what Dylan and The Band had been doing: George, who visited them in Woodstock in late 1968, was later heard talking to Ringo about 'The Basement Tapes' at the *Let It Be* sessions, during which he was recorded singing a snatch of 'Please, Mrs Henry'; Paul had scatted a line from The Band's song 'The Weight' as he performed 'Hey Jude' for the cameras. But they themselves had been among the first to capture a similar mood of simplicity and rootsiness with the long-overlooked single they recorded in February 1968, and released while Paul, John and George were still in India.

Paul later talked about Lady Madonna as a 'bluesy boogie-woogie thing', on which he had consciously tried to sound like Fats Domino. Five days after it was completed, The Beatles also recorded 'Hey Bulldog', a razor-sharp rock song written on the spot, which would eventually be added to the *Yellow Submarine* soundtrack. There were no orchestras, backwards effects or artifice on these tracks: they found The Beatles rediscovering the primal pleasures of rock music, and then reshaping it anew.

In India, they would write new songs simply, on acoustic guitars – and a clearing of the musical decks allowed them to be even more inventive, partly because, in the studio, something else happened. For sure, some of the new songs were hushed, and delicate. A few were the acme of supremely melodic, completely irresistible pop music, which chimed with a period when British groups and songwriters came close to perfecting the form (witness such huge 1968 hits as 'Days' by The Kinks, 'I Can't Let Maggie Go' by The Honeybus and Donovan's 'Jennifer Juniper').
But some of The Beatles' most powerful new songs were full of volume and raw power, chiming with the late-1960s explosion of hard rock, and the birth of heavy metal.

In the slipstream of such pioneers as Jimi Hendrix and The Who, 1968 was the year Led Zeppelin and Black Sabbath formed, the San Francisco band Blue Cheer released their piledriving cover version of Eddie Cochran's 'Summertime Blues', and Steppenwolf put out 'Born To Be Wild', the song that used an old William Burroughs phrase in a lyric that referenced 'heavy metal thunder'. 'The White Album' was a big part of this shift: play 'Helter Skelter', 'Everybody's Got Something To Hide Except Me And My Monkey', 'Yer Blues' and 'Birthday' – all on side three – and you hear music suddenly full of a weight and sheer volume that were still breathtakingly new.

Meanwhile, the world was exploding. If the love-and-peace promise of 1967 had sometimes sat uncomfortably with rising generational tension and revolt, 1968 was a year replete with uprisings, violence, and discord. The Vietnam War raged on, and the ugly mood in America was embodied not just by riots and protests, but shootings and assassinations. France came close to what some people thought would be a revolution. Britain saw no end of unrest at universities, much of it sparked by opposition to what the USA was doing in Southeast Asia, and towards the year's end, events in Northern Ireland marked the start of the Troubles. In Czechoslovakia, the liberating promise of the Prague Spring was snuffed out by the massed arrival of Soviet tanks.

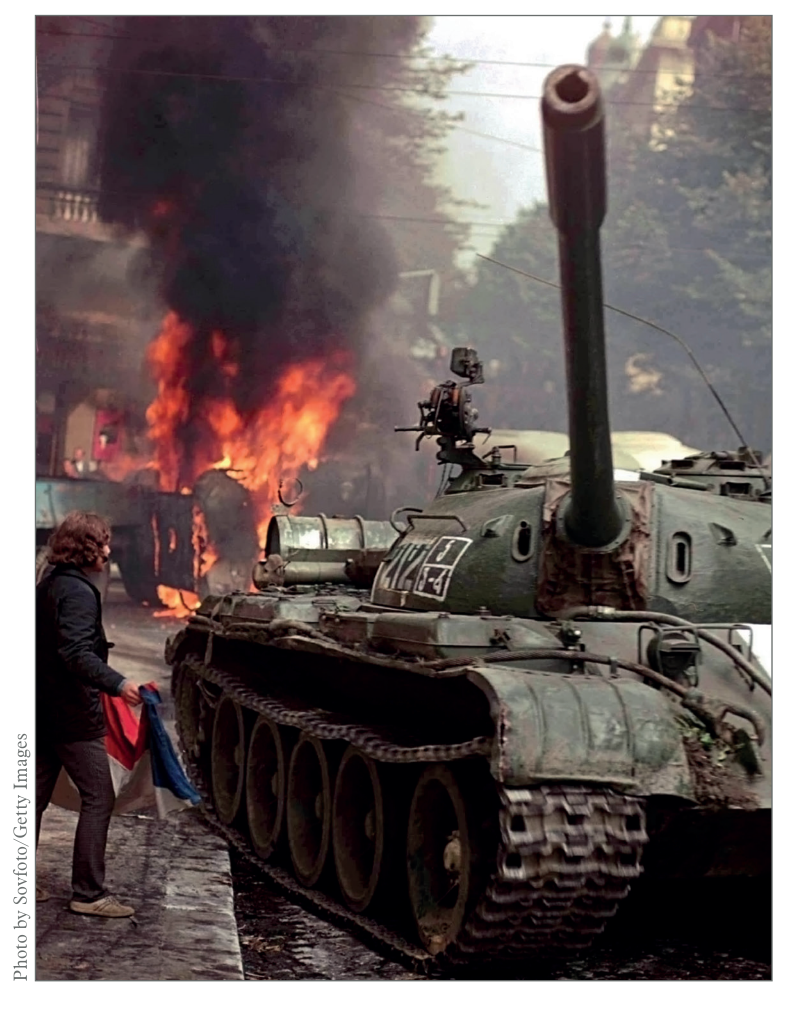


Photo by Sovfoto/Getty Images



Photo by Bernard Gotfryd/Getty Images



Photo by Rolls Press/Popperfoto/Getty Images



Photo by Dominique Berretty/Getty Images

Such was the backdrop to The Beatles' year. Martin Luther King's murder and the riots it caused across urban America happened just before John and George returned to the ordinary world from India. The revolts in Paris reached their peak just as John and Paul went to New York to launch Apple, the experiment in enlightened commerce and creativity Paul said represented a kind of 'Western Communism'. Bobby Kennedy was killed just after sessions had begun at Abbey Road, and work was about to start on Ringo's song 'Don't Pass Me By'. Czechoslovakia was invaded as Paul recorded 'Mother Nature's Son' and 'Wild Honey Pie'; by some weird accident of synchronicity, two days later, work would begin on 'Back In The U.S.S.R.'.

This was also the point at which thousands of young people arrived in Chicago for the convention of the Democratic Party, to take part in protests that had been planned for at least a year, and been recast and rethought as the politics of 1968 had been transformed by the deaths of Bobby Kennedy and Martin Luther King. As if to confirm that supposedly mainstream politics had no space for their voices, the man selected in Chicago to run as the Democratic candidate for the presidency would be the clear choice of the party establishment: Hubert Humphrey, the then Vice President. But a half-century on, what endure most vividly are the scenes that exploded around the convention and the awful police brutality, which had inevitable echoes of what the USA was doing in Vietnam.

By coincidence, this was the moment that The Beatles broke cover with two songs that sit at the heart of the story of 'The White Album': 'Hey Jude' and the fast, roughed-up rendition of John's 'Revolution', the critique of protest politics he had written in India, and first recorded in the pensive, bluesy form that would be titled 'Revolution 1'. For the people involved in the Chicago unrest and the wider community known back then as 'the movement', this was perhaps not the best moment to hear such a high-profile voice telling them that freeing their minds was maybe more important than changing institutions, and that everything was going to be all right. In *Rolling Stone* magazine, the writer Jon Landau carped that 'Hubert Humphrey couldn't have said it better'. Summoning up all its reserves of self-righteousness, the *New Left Review* called 'Revolution' 'a petty bourgeois cry of fear'. In 1969, the great Nina Simone released her own song called 'Revolution', knowingly built on the same up-tempo shuffling rhythm as John's, and written to answer his lyric line by line. 'Yeah, your Constitution / Well, my friend, its gonna have to bend,' she sang. 'I'm here to tell you about destruction / Of all the evil that will have to end.' It ended with cutting words indeed: 'Well, you know – you got to clean your brain.'

'That was very good: it was sort of like "Revolution" but not quite,' said John, the following year. 'That I sort of enjoyed – somebody who reacted immediately to what I had said.' His words highlighted the fact that 'Revolution' – in both its versions – represented something more interesting and complex than many of its critics suggested. It was the first stirring of his idea of music as instant commentary, soon manifested in 'The Ballad Of John And Yoko' and some of the first songs he created as a solo artist: a song tentatively put into the world in the heat of the moment, intended to spark a dialogue. As proved by the famous 'out / in' line he sang on 'Revolution 1', it was also an expression of very human ambivalence – and on the single version, as the US writer Greil Marcus recognised, John's doubts were combined with music that was 'immediate and ecstatic'. From his opening howl, through the wailing guitar solo and on to the primal shouts of 'All right!' that brought the whole thing to a close, here was 1968's anarchic spirit brought to life, even if most of the lyrics conveyed something rather different.

1968's tumult found its way into other songs almost as directly. Paul's 'Blackbird' – one of those McCartney compositions so timelessly perfect that it almost suggests an age-old folk song – was a coded tribute to 'black people's struggle in the southern states', written and recorded as the quest for civil rights turned newly violent and embattled. And when he wrote 'While My Guitar Gently Weeps', George was pretty clearly commenting on a mood of unrest and looming darkness – something evidenced by a line absent on the finished version: 'I look at the trouble and hate that is raging.'

In a year when massed ranks of policemen were regularly charging into crowds of young demonstrators, a send-up of power and class distinction called 'Piggies' was always going to speak volumes, whether its author had intended it or not. And when bullets were flying in Vietnam, the Black Panthers were turning firearms into symbols of revolutionary intent, and the victims of gun violence included not just Kennedy and King, but also Andy Warhol and the German student leader Rudi Dutschke (both of whom survived murder attempts), a song brazenly titled 'Happiness Is A Warm Gun' was bound to suggest a dark kind of satire, whatever its actual content. 'The White Album' channelled its time: as a critic in the *Sunday Times* later commented, 'Musically, there is beauty, horror, surprise, chaos, order. And that is the world; and that is what The Beatles are on about. Created by, creating for, their age.'

Looking back, this is part of what I began to pick up when I first experienced 'The White Album'. For sure, its recurrent mood of shadowy strangeness is broken by songs that are instantly uplifting – most obviously 'Ob-La-Di, Ob-La-Da', 'Birthday', 'Martha My Dear' and the underrated, gorgeous 'I Will'. But trouble and the sense of a world moving beyond rational explanation are never far away. In the review from *The Observer* reproduced on the sleeve of the *Yellow Submarine* soundtrack, the writer Tony Palmer locked on to what some of the music evoked: 'Black birds, black clouds, broken wings, lizards, destruction'.

Which brings us to the eight minutes of sound in which all the double album's latent darkness comes to a head. 'Revolution 9' was the mélange of tape loops, found sound, music and seemingly random speech that was created early on in the album sessions, as John seized on 1968's unrest and tried to create what he later called 'a drawing of a revolution'. On first listening, what it suggested was captured by Tony Palmer. 'Cruel, paranoiac, burning, agonized, hopeless,' he wrote, 'it is given shape by an anonymous bingo voice which goes on repeating "Number nine, number nine. Number nine" – until you want to scream.'

If this was John's heart of darkness, Paul had his own equivalent. 'Helter Skelter' began as a quiet, reined-in blues jam, before it became the exploration of scarring noise whose sheer relentlessness was captured in the way it faded out and back in, as if the band had played it for whole hours. Here, it seemed, was a very timely staging of barely controlled anarchy, delivered with an intensity that very few rock groups had ever got near.

By contrast, the early demos for the album recorded at George's house in Esher, Surrey, at the end of May 1968 had represented an altogether quieter, subtle, often more introspective kind of Beatles music. Clearly, these early try-outs were not made for public consumption but, in retrospect, they shine fascinating light on what The Beatles were in the process of creating. The bootleg versions of these tapes might have hinted at what they captured – but here, in crystal-clear fidelity for the first time, they work as an amazing extended glimpse of their creators' artistry: the invention of the 'Unplugged' concept, before anyone else had thought of it.

The demos' allure is heightened by ambient sounds, and snatches of background conversation. The ghostly, Lewis Carroll-esque heart of 'Cry Baby Cry' is thrown into sharp relief by the fact that this first version features only John's vocals, and a single acoustic guitar; on 'Back In The U.S.S.R.' and 'Dear Prudence', you get a clear idea of what these songs



Photos by Linda McCartney

must have sounded like as they were written in India, among sunshine and nature. 'Yer Blues' works just as well as an apparent pastiche of country blues as it would in its full electric incarnation.

There are also songs that The Beatles would never record, let alone release: George's 'Sour Milk Sea' and 'Circles', John's 'Child Of Nature', and Paul's 'Junk', the beautifully melancholic glimpse of some faded English backstreet that would be included on his first solo album. On all the songs recorded in this amazing outpouring, the combination of double-tracked vocals, acoustic instruments and the intimate atmosphere comes close to creating a new kind of music that The Beatles never actually brought to fruition: at times, hearing the recordings properly is like experiencing a side of them you never really knew existed.

In the studio, the dependable excellence of George Martin, his assistant Chris Thomas and the EMI team of engineers ensured that the new material was recorded with as much panache as ever. But a lot of these songs were realised using methods that were new. Even on *Sgt. Pepper*, tracks had rarely gone beyond ten takes. Now, The Beatles' energy tended to be expended not on the kind of ornate overdubs that had defined a lot of that album, but on multiple renditions of songs that piled up as they chased that certain elusive something. The recording of 'Ob-La-Di, Ob-La-Da' stretched over six nights. George's 'Not Guilty' reached Take 102. For Ringo in particular, these methods demanded no end of patience, and stamina.

And there was another big change in the studio, as John's life was changed by his life-defining relationship with Yoko. She and John had become lovers and creative partners on 19 May 1968, when she had visited him at his home in Weybridge and they had recorded the experimental music later released on *Two Virgins*, and as John said, 'made love at dawn'. Eleven days later, work on The Beatles' album began, and she accompanied him to the studio. They were inseparable: she went wherever he did, and vice versa.

Ringo's recollection of the change this represented gets to the heart of what happened, seen from the other three Beatles' perspective. 'Yoko being in the studio a lot was a new thing,' he said. 'It was all new… It created tension because most of the time the four of us were very close, and very possessive of each other in a way; we didn't like strangers coming in too much. And that's what Yoko was – not to John, but to the three of us. That was where *we* were together, and that's why we worked so well. We were all trying to be cool and not mention it, but inside we were all feeling it and talking in corners.'

'Everybody seemed to be paranoid except us two, who were in the glow of love,' said John. 'Everything is clear and open when you're in love. Everybody was tense around us: "What is *she* doing here at the session?" All this madness [was] going on around us because we just happened to want to be together all the time.'

Yoko is a palpable presence on the album. She sang one line – 'not when he looked so fierce' – on 'The Continuing Story Of Bungalow Bill'. With Pattie Harrison, she joined in on the chorus of 'Birthday'. Her voice defines one of the key moments of 'Revolution 9' – when she utters the words 'You become naked', and the track collapses into a cacophony of



shouting. She was also there in 'Julia', the song John wrote about his late mother, but which contained the words 'ocean child': in English, Yoko translates as 'child of the ocean'.

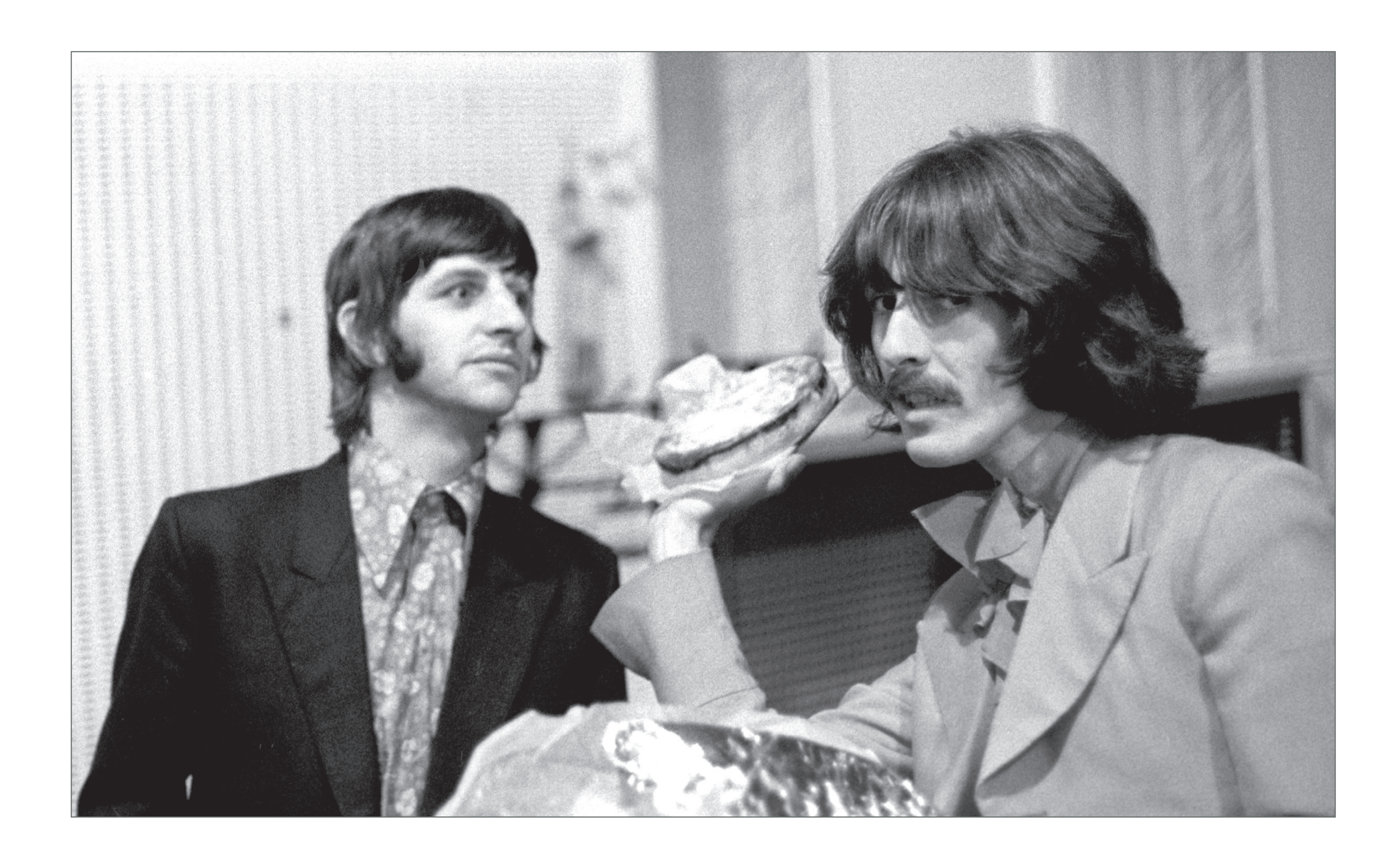
That Yoko's presence initially caused the other three Beatles bafflement and confusion is self-evident, but this was only one element of the internal friction that often intruded on the sessions, and added to the music's sometimes troubled ambience. The idea that 'The White Album' found the Beatles' collective identity giving way to each of them taking charge of their individual songs is a cliché, but it also has a large element of truth. Some 'White Album' tracks are solo pieces, and the album's huge stylistic range is partly down to the way that its three key songwriters were pulling in different directions. There were moments, moreover, when tensions evidently came out in the open – their long-standing engineer Geoff Emerick said he left the sessions for exactly that reason.

Most notably, on 22 August, Ringo temporarily quit. 'I felt I wasn't playing great, and I also felt the other three were really happy and I was an outsider,' he later reflected. He was gone for two weeks, while John, Paul and George continued to labour in the studio on 'Back In The U.S.S.R.' and 'Dear Prudence'. Ringo returned to find his drums covered in flowers.

For all these signs of discord, one thing is particularly worth remembering. A lot of 'The White Album' was the work of an intuitively connected band who continued to collaborate with an amazing sense of shared purpose. What was going on at Apple was still the focus of an optimism seemingly confirmed when 'Hey Jude' – which featured an Apple label and was released on the same launch day as Apple 45s by Mary Hopkin, Jackie Lomax, and The Black Dyke Mills Band – spent nine weeks at the top of the American charts, the longest run at number one achieved by any Beatles single. The divisive entry of Allen Klein into The Beatles' world was still a few months away. Ringo himself would later remember 'The White Album' sessions as a time of intense 'group activity'.

The pained intensity of 'Yer Blues' was partly traceable to the fact that it was recorded by all four Beatles in an Abbey Road storage room. On 'Birthday', which was composed and recorded either side of a BBC Two screening of the 1950s movie classic *The Girl Can't Help It*, they delivered rock 'n' roll music with an amazing energy, once again alchemising what they had first perfected in Hamburg into something incredible. 'I'm So Tired' was a consummate ensemble performance. For all that George brought Eric Clapton in to play on 'While My Guitar Gently Weeps' – partly to get over his sense that John and Paul 'weren't taking it seriously' – Paul's bass part, piano and harmony vocal are an integral part of the song's magic. And 'Everybody's Got Something To Hide Except Me And My Monkey' numbers among the most powerful performances they ever recorded. As against any idea that 'The White Album' is the work of a group who were audibly breaking apart, there are few songs anywhere in their catalogue in which they play with such a fierce collective power.

A couple of moments of dialogue and improvised music also highlight the fact that their closeness was still intact. On 16 September 1968, as Paul led John – on percussion – and Ringo through 'I Will', he broke into



a brief rendition of 'Step Inside Love', the song he had written in 1967 for Cilla Black, the improvised piece that would be used at the start of 'Revolution 9' ('Can you take me back, where I came from?'), and the old 1930s standard 'Blue Moon', before the three of them performed an improvised bit of bossa nova whose title came from John. 'Los Paranoias / Just enjoy us,' sang Paul, as John added hammy shouts of 'I can't take it!'. 'Oh come on now, chaps,' said Paul. 'Swing, à la Latina.' The three of them were clearly doing something the received version of 'The White Album' story has rather overlooked: having fun.

A week later, 'Happiness Is A Warm Gun' was proving to be a demanding song to record: though the final version was edited together from two takes, its three very different sections were played as we hear them, in sequence – and this was obviously a pretty trying business, which might have been expected to sooner or later cause friction. But the tapes find The Beatles collectively pushing themselves to get it right with graciousness, and plenty of good humour. 'Is anybody finding it easier?' asked John. 'It seems a little easier… it's just no fun, but it's easier.'

'Easier *and* fun,' said George.

'Oh all right,' said John. 'If you insist.'

The album formally titled The Beatles but known as 'The White Album' as soon as it was released was finally finished in the late afternoon of 17 October 1968. In the world at large, 1968's endless stream of news flowed on: the album was completed one day after the African-American athletes Tommie Smith and John Carlos had raised their fists in a black power salute after winning the gold and bronze medals in the men's 200 metres at the Mexico City Olympics.

Equally dramatically, work was completed the day before seven police officers and two police dogs raided Ringo's flat in Marylebone: once the home of Jimi Hendrix, and by then the temporary abode of John and Yoko. Thanks to a notorious London cop who was later found to be corrupt and dismissed from the force, the two of them were charged with possession of cannabis and – seemingly because they had not let the officers in before they put some clothes on – obstruction. The subsequent images of John and Yoko outside Marylebone Magistrates Court, all but lost in a sea of blue uniforms and fighting their way out, look like the intimations of fear and claustrophobia in some of John's 'White Album' songs suddenly brought to life. 'Imagine your worst paranoia,' he told The Beatles' friend, aide and adviser Neil Aspinall. 'Well, it's here.'

If the establishment was now baring its teeth, the fact that the Beatles still had no end of friends and allies was proved by the frenzied praise that soon greeted the album's release. 'Whatever else it is or isn't, it is the best album they have ever released and only the Beatles are capable of making a better one,' wrote *Rolling Stone*'s founder, Jann Wenner. 'You are either hip to it, or you ain't.' Tony Palmer said that The Beatles had landed 'on distant shores of the imagination that others have not even sighted'. In the *New York Time*s, by contrast, the writer and critic Nik Cohn explained that 'The White Album' had left him cold. 'It is by turns, solemn and facetious, despairing and camp,


Photo by Linda McCartney

maudlin and uproarious,' he wrote. 'Quite obviously, it's been put together with endless care and tenderness and, finally, it's boring almost beyond belief.' Horses for courses and all that, but this was almost comically wrong.

Within 18 months, any lingering conversations about the album's musical merits had been swamped by a story that was first revealed in the late summer of 1969, when news broke of horrific murders committed in Southern California by an ex-convict and former aspiring singer called Charles Manson, and the group of his followers known as The Family. In early 1970, it became clear that the mess of faux-religious nonsense that formed his motive was partly traceable to his bizarre interpretation of 'The White Album', whereby a helter-skelter was not an English fairground ride but an apocalyptic uprising and race war, and many of the album's other songs were full of what he thought were secret messages. Given that John's song 'Glass Onion' had satirised exactly this tendency among the more frazzled elements of The Beatles' public – 'Here's another clue for you all,' he sang, mockingly – this twist in the story of 'The White Album' came with a grim irony.

For the small number of rather warped people who will always pick through music and popular culture looking for anything macabre, the fact that the Manson case involved a Beatles album that sometimes evoked eeriness and fear – and, more specifically, what he thought he had heard in 'Helter Skelter', 'Piggies', and 'Revolutions 1 and 9' – seemed somehow fitting. But Manson had divined instructions and advice even in the music recorded for *Magical Mystery Tour*, as well as such 'White Album' songs as 'I Will', 'Rocky Raccoon', 'Honey Pie' and 'Don't Pass Me By'. 'Much of this I would never use in the trial; it was simply too absurd,' wrote the Deputy District Attorney of Los Angeles County, Vincent Bugliosi. And what John and Paul later said about all this surely put everything in its right place. 'He's barmy,' said John, 'like any other Beatles fan who reads mysticism into it… I don't know, what's "Helter Skelter" got to do with knifing somebody?'

'After all those little interpretations there was finally this horrific interpretation of it all,' offered Paul. 'It all went wrong at that point, but it was nothing to do with us. What can you do?'

'The White Album' soon took its deserved place in The Beatles' canon, and its reputation and influence quietly evolved. Some of this was as much about its sheer size and sense of ambition as it was about the music: there were other big double albums in the 1960s (Dylan's *Blonde On Blonde*, Hendrix's *Electric Ladyland*, The Mothers Of Invention's *Freak Out!*), but it was these 30 songs that decisively opened the way for musicians to extend their horizons beyond the standard LP format. Without 'The White Album', there might not have been such classics as Stevie Wonder's *Songs In The Key Of Life*, Fleetwood Mac's *Tusk*, The Clash's *London Calling* and Prince's *Sign 'O' The Times* – or, for that matter, George's brilliant triple album *All Things Must Pass*.

It says something about the boundary-pushing edginess of 'The White Album' that two of the songs on 'The White Album' were eventually covered by Siouxsie and The Banshees. The artful, often menacing, band formed by members of the Sex Pistols' inner circle included a reinvention of 'Helter Skelter' on their first album, and then had an

international hit with their mesmerising reading of ‘Dear Prudence’. (‘I remember growing up with “The White Album” – I loved it for their experimenting,’ said Siouxsie Sioux.) In 1980, while listening to John Peel’s nightly Radio 1 show in the wake of that fateful visit to the library, I was amazed to hear a hyperactive, 1,000 mph version of ‘Everybody’s Got Something To Hide Except Me And My Monkey’, which I now know was by The Feelies, the New Jersey quartet who were a huge influence on some of the early pioneers of American indie-rock. ‘The White Album’, it seemed, had endured, as an example of creativity and invention on which successive generations of musicians would draw.

Since then, its influence has surfaced on records by – among other people – The Smiths, whose 1987 masterpiece ‘Death Of A Disco Dancer’ sounds like a hybrid of ‘Dear Prudence’ and ‘I’m So Tired’, created by musicians who were consciously trying to emulate those songs’ magic. Blur’s ‘Beetlebum’, a British number one in 1997, is cut from similar cloth, with an added element of ‘Why Don’t We Do It In The Road?’. ‘Karma Police’, the much-loved song from Radiohead’s *OK Computer*, is an audible relative of ‘Sexy Sadie’. ‘Helter Skelter’ is now a hard-rock standard, covered in the past by Aerosmith, U2 and Oasis. In 1990, the then Pixies bassist Kim Deal’s project The Breeders recorded ‘Happiness Is A Warm Gun’: a confrontational, reckless, suitably strange version whose fascination was partly down to hearing its serpentine lyrics sung by a woman. And, a little later on, ‘The White Album’ became an enduring touchstone for the kind of left-field US singer-songwriters who have since created a whole lineage of music, from the late Elliott Smith (who said he knew he wanted to become a musician at the age of five, ‘as soon as I heard “The White Album”’) to the 21st-century *auteur* Father John Misty.

In 2004, the musician and producer Danger Mouse – aka Brian Burton – put out a limited run of *The Grey Album*, the result of mixing a capella tracks of Jay Z’s *The Black Album* with a cut-up and rearranged tangle of The Beatles’ music presented here. What he called an ‘experimental art project’ was soon illicitly downloaded by millions of listeners, and acclaimed as *Entertainment Weekly*’s album of the year. An interview in *The Guardian* found Burton praising ‘Ringo, the master hip-hop drummer’; in among tracks that drew on such songs as ‘Julia’, ‘While My Guitar Gently Weeps’ and ‘Rocky Raccoon’, perhaps the most spectacular was an interlude that knotted together fragments of ‘I’m So Tired’ and snatches of ‘Revolution 9’. What Danger Mouse did ensured that, although ‘The White Album’ had so perfectly soundtracked the world of the late 1960s, it also became woven into the early 21st century. This, presumably, was why Paul distanced himself from attempts to crack down on *The Grey Album* because of infringement of copyright. ‘I didn’t mind when something like that happened,’ he said. ‘But the record company minded. They put up a fuss. But I was like, “Take it easy guys, it’s a tribute.”’

In their wildly different ways, Danger Mouse, Radiohead, The Smiths and The Breeders all confirmed one unarguable fact: that ‘The White Album’ contained some of the most diverse, strange, rich music The Beatles created. If ever an album was so replete with fascination that it could hold people’s attention for months at a time and reveal new insights even after years of listening, it was – and still is – this one.

So, here it is, sounding even more expansive and incredible than it did before. The new mixes of the original album by Giles Martin give its music an amazing scale and space, so that the songs somehow sound like themselves, only more so. In many of them, you can hear details that you may have missed, or overlooked: the handclaps on ‘Back In the U.S.S.R.’ and the same song’s stampeding combination of guitar and bass parts; the perfection of Paul’s vocals on ‘I Will’; the guitar-playing on ‘Everybody’s Got Something To Hide Except Me And My Monkey’ and the drumming on ‘Long, Long, Long’; a beautiful organ part on ‘Revolution 1’; the falsetto backing vocals on ‘Savoy Truffle’.

In among the material that has never been released, it’s fascinating to hear a version of ‘Cry Baby Cry’ that moves away from the baroque eeriness that was there in the Esher version, and would resurface on the finished version. There is no end of wonderment in the full-length, 10-minute version of ‘Revolution 1’ – Take 18, to be precise – and elements of noise and sound that would find their way into ‘Revolution 9’. Perhaps most compelling of all is the take of ‘Helter Skelter’ on which Paul first decides to let rip, in the midst of slapback echo that only heightens the impact of what he sings, and how he sings it: a real moment of revelation, and perhaps one of the most stunning Beatles performances ever captured.

It was never The Beatles’ job to rhapsodise about their own records, but the archives prove that they always knew how special ‘The White Album’ was. ‘I always preferred it to all the other albums, including *Pepper*, because I thought the music was better,’ said John. ‘The *Pepper* myth is bigger, but the music on “The White Album” is far superior. I wrote a lot of good shit on that. I like all the stuff I did, and the other stuff as well. I like the whole album. I haven’t heard it in a long time, but I know there’s a lot of good songs on it.’

‘We always tried to make things different,’ said George. ‘In a matter of months we’d changed in so many ways, so there was no chance of it ever being like the previous record. All the experience that had happened in India, and since *Sgt. Pepper*, was all embodied in that album.’

‘It stood up,’ said Paul, ‘but it wasn’t a pleasant one to make. Then again, sometimes those things work for your art. The fact that it’s got so much on it is one of the things that’s cool about it. The songs are very varied. I think it’s a fine album.’ His words seem to centre on the tensions that surfaced while it was being created, but the other side of the story is there in Ringo’s more upbeat recollection: ‘While we were recording “The White Album”, we ended up being more of a band again, and that’s what I always love. I love being in a band.’

Such slightly contradictory memories reflect not just the complexities of how The Beatles lived and worked, but the array of moods and atmospheres ‘The White Album’ contains. In truth, it is all here: sweetness, light, darkness, beauty, horror, surprise, chaos, order, love, loss, life, death, and just about everything besides.

Even now, nearly 40 years after I took it home and found a whole world, the brilliance of this music often hits me with the same force that it did all those years ago. But some of its power and significance is also down to where it sits in The Beatles’ story.

‘The White Album’ ends with flutes, a single horn, and a final swell of strings and harp, as Ringo leans into the studio microphone and whispers the final words: ‘Good night / Good night everybody / Everybody everywhere / Good night.’ Place yourself in that moment and you realise that, as everything comes to a close, most of the music these four musicians collectively gave the world is complete. The same sense of twilight that pervades some of this music applies to their lives as Beatles, and barely a year remains.

In other words: it’s getting very near the end.





Photo by Linda McCartney

'Martha My Dear' : *Trident Studios*



‘Good Night’ : *Abbey Road Studios*

I'm So Tired.
Dont pass me by
YER BLUES.
Obla dee Obla da
Back in the USSR
While my guitar gently weeps.
BIRTHDAY
HELTER SKELTER
Piggies.
Revolution
Savoy Truffle.
glass onion
DEAR PRUDENCE
lady madonna
Long Long Long -
(the continuing story of) BUNGALOW BILL.
JULIA
HEY JUDE.

SONG TITLES.

I'M SO TIRED, John in bed.

DON'T PASS ME BY, Ringo as fiddler (C+W handout.)

BLACKBIRD, Blackbird from bird book.

EVERYBODYS GOT SOMETHING TO HIDE EXCEPT FOR ME AND MY MONKEY, Black space.

GOODNIGHT, Ringo saying goodnight to his kids.

YER BLUES, Blues.

OB LA DI, OB LA DA, Jimmy Scott and wife in market

ROCKY RACCOON, Mal as Rocky being shot by Dan while

~~WILD~~ HONEY PIE, — (Hollywood handout) Lil sits on 4 poster.

MOTHER NATURES SON, Paul by stream.

BACK IN THE U.S.S.R. Paul Throwing flowers to fat Russian (BOAC)

SEXY SADIE, Black vinyl special.

WHILE MY GUITAR GENTLY WEEPS, Guitar rain splashed window

NOT GUILTY, George smiling behind bars.

HELTER SKELTER, Beatles on helter skelter

CRY BABY CRY, Alice fancy dress party on lawn.

REVOLUTION NO. 9, White space

WHAT'S NEW MARY JANE, Alexis machine

CHILD OF NATURE, John standing in hot sun.

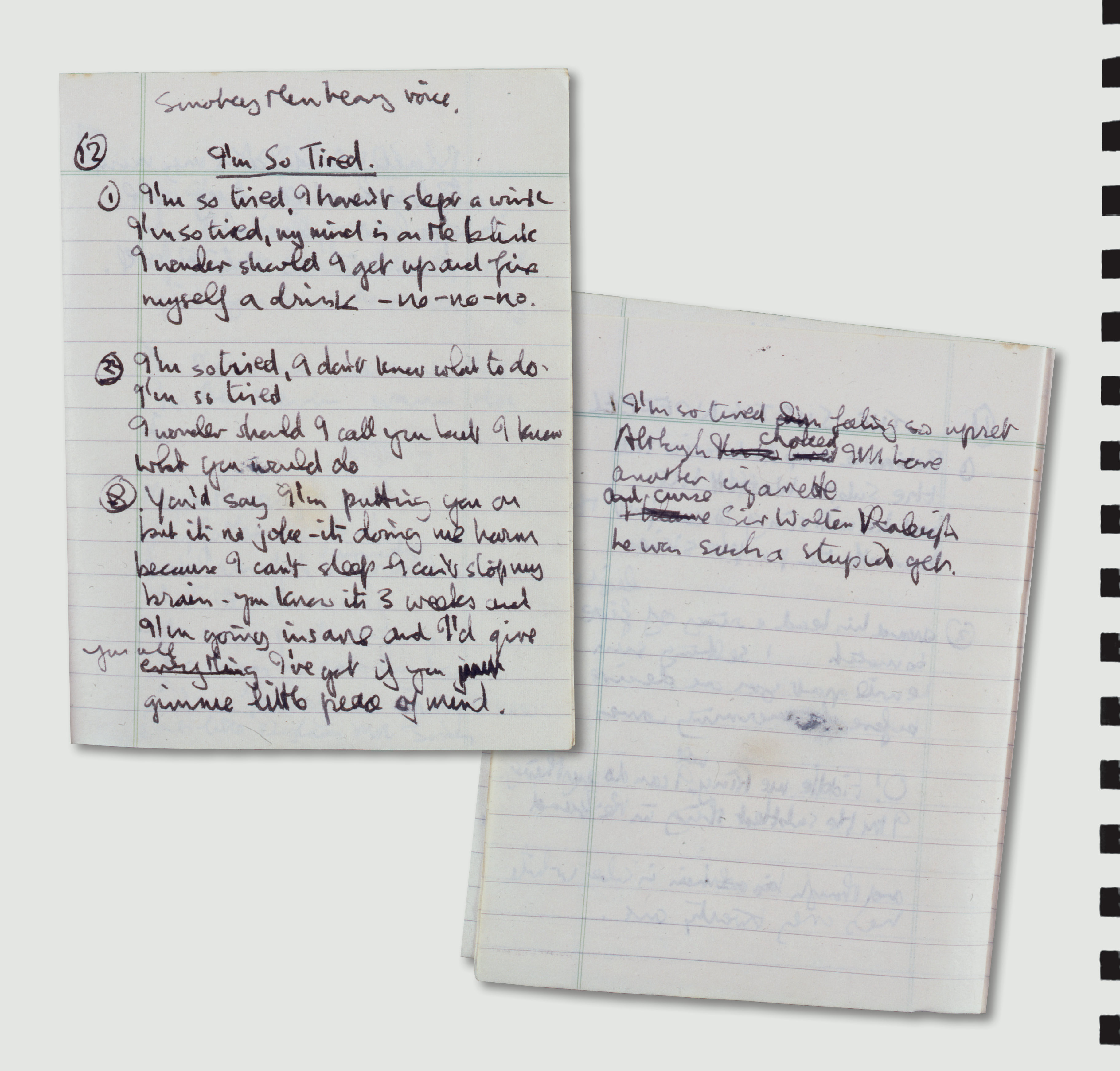
HAPPINESS IS A WARM GUN, Johns hand on steel gun.

THE CONTINUING STORY OF BUNGALOW BILL, Ringo as tiger. John as heavily armed Bill

JULIA, Picture of Julia – or of cloud.

POLYTHENE PAM, In person.

MAXWELLS SILVER HAMMER,


Smokey then heavy voice.

(12) I'm So Tired.

(1) I'm so tired, I haven't slept a wink
I'm so tired, my mind is on the blink
I wonder should I get up and fix
myself a drink – no–no–no.

(3) I'm so tired, I don't know what to do.
I'm so tired
I wonder should I call you but I know
what you would do

(8) You'd say I'm putting you on
but it's no joke – it's doing me harm
because I can't sleep I can't stop my
brain – you know it's 3 weeks and
I'm going insane and I'd give
you all everything I've got if you ~~just~~
gimme little peace of mind.

I'm so tired ~~I'm~~ feeling so upset
Although ~~[illegible]~~ choked ~~[illegible]~~ I'll have
another cigarette
and curse
~~+ blame~~ Sir Walter Raleigh
he was such a stupid get.

Dont pass me by. . .

4. I'm waiting ~~[illegible]~~ for your footsteps
Coming up the drive
I'm waiting for your footsteps
I know they'll soon arrive

END.

I feel a little foolish sitting here alone
Instead of eating crackers I think I'll just get stoned

You came all wrapped in cellophane
with purple bursting ~~to~~ free
The card said open carefully
and pay for C.O.D.

(13)

YER BLUES.

Yes I'm lonely - wanna die
Yes I'm lonely - wanna die
if I ain't dead already ooh
girl you know the reason why.

In the mornin wanna die
In the evenin wanna die
eh

My mother was of the earth
My father was of the sky
but I am of the universe
~~underworld~~ and
that's the reason why
The eagle picks my eyes
The worm he eats my bones
I'm feeling so uptight now
just like Dylan's Mr Jones

Black cloud crosses my mind
Blue mist round my soul
feel so suicidal
even hate my rock'n'roll.

Desmond has a barrow in the market place
Molly is the singer in a band
Desi says to Molly girl I like your face,
And Molly says this as she takes him by the hand

CHORUS Obla dee Obla da, life goes on, bra,
la-la how the life goes on. -

Desmond takes a trolley to the jewellers store
Buys a twenty. carat golden ring,
Takes it back to Molly waiting at the door
And as he gives it to her, she begins to sing

CHORUS. - - - - - -

In a couple of years they have built a home sweet home
with a couple of kids running in the yard of
Desmond & Molly Jones - - - - -

~~Desmond~~ Happy ever after in the market place
Desmond lets the children lend a hand
Molly stays at home & does her pretty face
And in the evening she still sings this with the band

CHORUS - - - - - - - - - -

MIDDLE.

Happy ever after in the market place,
Desmond lets the children lend a hand
Molly stays at home and does her pretty face
and in the evening she still sings it with the band.

MIDDLE

Repeat verse

[illegible]

Flew in from Miami Beach B O A C
Didn't get to bed last night
On the way the paper bag was on my knee
Man I had a dreadful flight
I'm back in the U S S R
You don't know how lucky you are boy
Back in the U S S R .

Been away so long I hardly knew the place
Gee it's good to be back home.
Leave it till tomorrow to unpack my case
Honey disconnect the phone
I'm back in the U S S R - - - - - -
Well the Ukraine girls really knock me out
They leave the west behind
+ Moscow girls make me sing + shout
that Georgia's always on my.... mind.
Show me round ~~the~~ YOUR snow peaked mountains way down South
Take me to your daddy's farm
Let me hear [SEE] your balalaika working out

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Tampering - tapering, Tempering, Thundering
Tittering Tottering, Towering, Toppling ✓
Wandering, Watering, Wavering, ~~Weathering~~
Whimpering, Wintering, Whispering, Wondering ✓

and love that sleeps
whilst my guitar gently weeps

I look at you all see the love there that's sleeping
Whilst my guitar gently weeps.
I look at the floor and I see it needs sweeping
Still my guitar gently weeps.
I don't know why - nobody told you, how to
unfold your love
I don't know how, someone controlled you, how they
blindfolded you.

I look at the ~~sky~~ world and I notice its ~~clouding~~ turning
While my guitar gently weeps
with every mistake we must surely be learning
~~I'm wondering why your cigars keep on burning~~
Still ~~your~~ my guitar gently weeps!

burning,
churning
learning
I don't know ~~how~~ why yearning
You were perverted too - You were diverted ~~too~~
I don't know ~~How~~ you got inverted
no one alerted you.
I look at the ~~Powers around~~ trouble that's
I ~~thinking~~ of ~~everywhere~~
~~I'm look at the~~ walls ~~of the world~~ that ~~is~~ raging
~~While~~ as I'm sitting here doing nothing but aging

RIFF

THEY SAY ITS YOUR BIRTHDAY
WELL ITS MY BIRTHDAY TOO YEAH
THEY SAY ITS YOUR BIRTHDAY
WE'RE GOING TO HAVE A GOOD TIME
I'M GLAD ITS YOUR BIRTHDAY
HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU

DRUMS



I WOULD LIKE YOU TO DANCE
TAKE A CHA CHA CHA CHANCE
I WOULD LIKE YOU TO DANCE

SOLO

STAGGERS

THEY SAY ITS YOUR BIRTHDAY
WELL ITS MY BIRTHDAY TOO YEAH
THEY SAY ITS YOUR BIRTHDAY
WÈRE GOING TO HAVE A GOOD TIME
IM GLAD ITS YOUR BIRTHDAY
HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU.

HELTER SKELTER

DO YOU DONT YOU WANT ME TO LOVE YOU
IM COMING DOWN FAST BUT I'M MILES ABOVE YOU
TELL ME TELL ME THE ANSWER
YOU MAY BE A LOVER BUT YOU AINT NO DANCER
LOOK OUT HELTER SKELTER – REPEAT

WHEN I GET TO THE BOTTOM, I GO BACK TO THE TOP
OF THE HILL (RIDE)
AND I STOP AND I TURN AND I GIVE YOU A
THRILL –
TILL I SEE YOU AGAIN.

1st VERSE
CHORUS
2nd VERSE
CHORUS
MIDDLE
SOLO
CHORUS
~~MIDDLE~~

(9) Piggies.

have you seen the little Piggies crawling in the dirt?
and for all the little piggies Life is getting worse —
always having dirt to play ~~in~~ ~~about~~ around in —

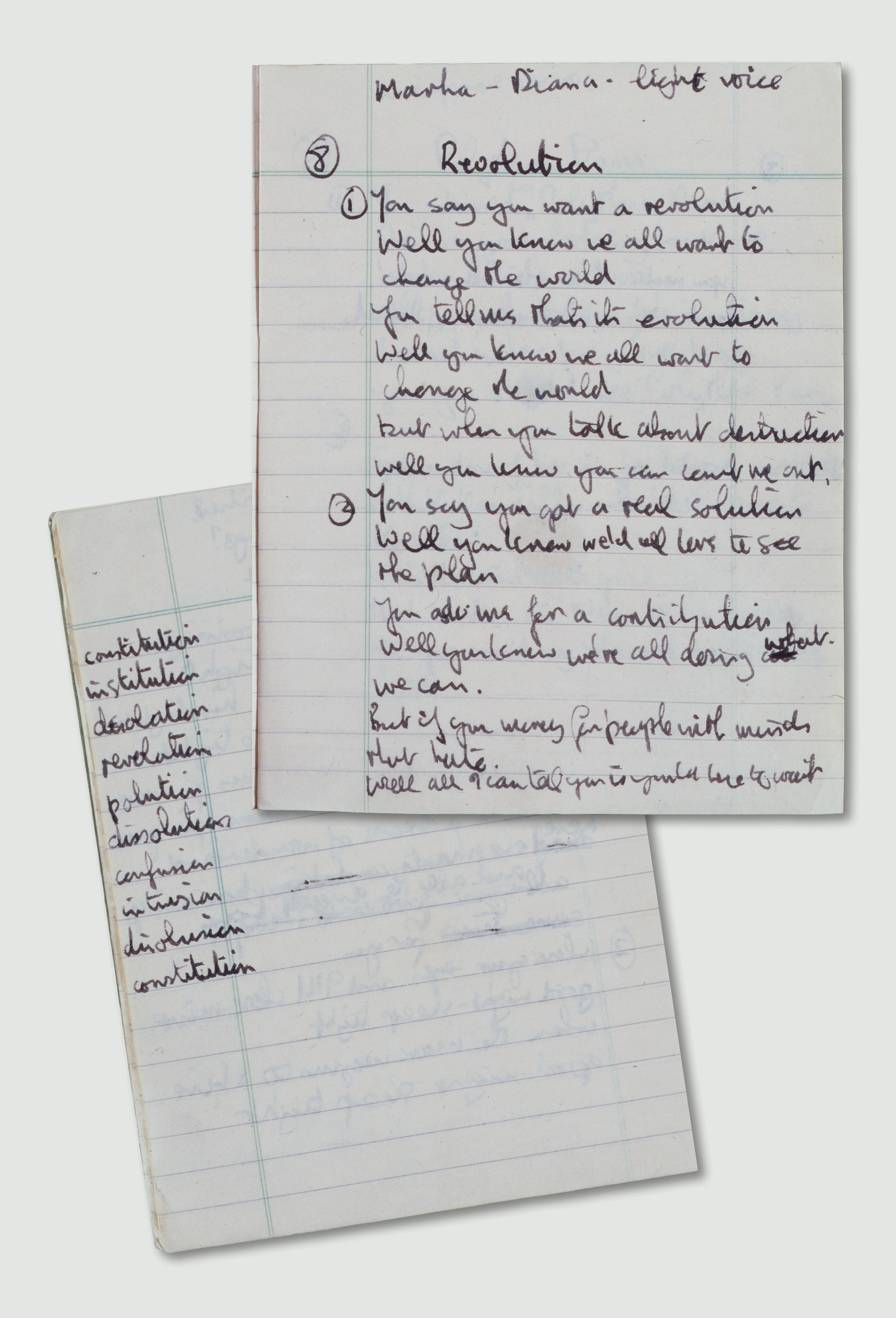
(2) Have you seen the bigges Piggies in their Startched
white Shirts — ~~and for all~~ You can see the Bigges Piggies stirring up
the dirt — ~~they~~ all with have clean shirts — to play ~~about~~ ~~around~~ in.

middle In their ~~sty~~ Styes with all their backing
They dont care what goes on around —
In their Eyes there's something Lacking —
~~what they need's a damn good whacking!~~

Solo

(3) Everywhere there's lots of Piggies Living Piggy Lives
You can See them out to ~~dine~~ Dinner with their Piggy Wifes
~~Holding~~ clutching forks and knives to eat their Bacon

(4) Everywhere there's lots of Piggies - playing Piggy Pranks
You can see them on there trotters - at the Piggy Banks
Paying Piggy thanks — to THEE Pig Brother!


Martha - Diana - light voice

(8) Revolution

(1) You say you want a revolution
Well you know we all want to
change the world
You tell us that it's evolution
Well you know we all want to
change the world
But when you talk about destruction
Well you know you can count me out.
(2) You say you got a real solution
Well you know we'd all love to see
the plan
You ask me for a contribution
Well you know we're all doing what
we can.
But if you want money for people with minds
that hate
Well all I can tell you is you'll have to wait

constitution
institution
desolation
revolution
pollution
dissolution
confusion
intrusion
delusion
constitution

Savoy Truffle.

(1) Cream tangerine and montelimar _ a ginger sling
with a pineapple heart _ A coffee dessert _
yes you know its 'good News' ___ but youre going
to have them all 'pulled out' after the Savoy truffle

(2) Cool cherry cream and a nice 'Apple tart' _
I feel your taste all the time we're apart
A ~~Coconut~~ fudge really blows down those blues
But you're going to have them all pulled out
after the Savoy truffle.

You may not feel it now but when ~~it [illegible]~~ the pain cuts thru
~~[illegible] know and how~~
youre going to know and how
the sweat is going to fill your ~~Brow~~ Head _
~~It will become too~~ much ~~[illegible]~~ you'll shout out loud.

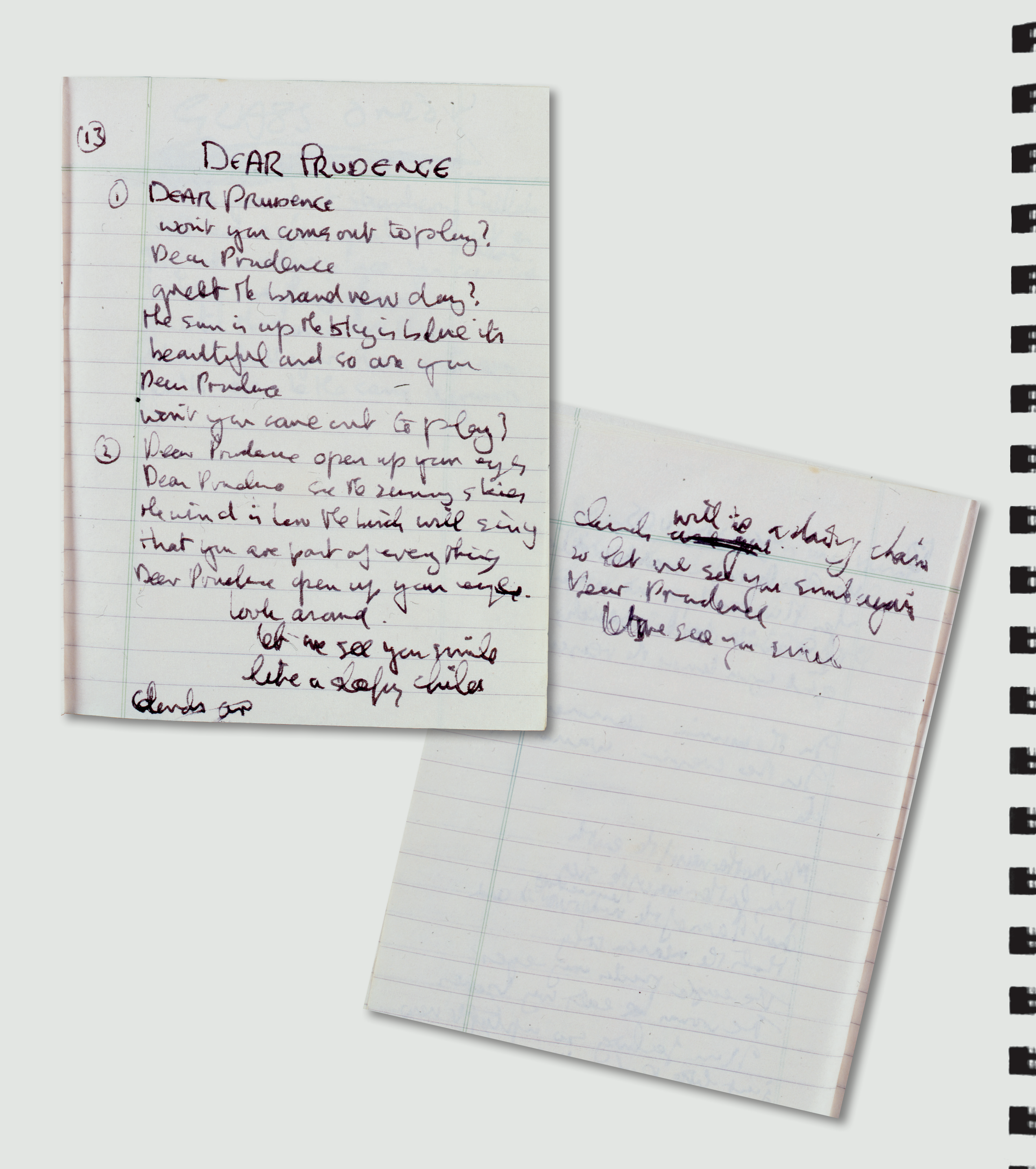
I told you 'bout strawberry fields
you know the place where nothing is real
well here's another place you can go.
where everything flows.

looking through the bent backed tulips,
to see how the other half lives.
looking through a glass onion.

I told you 'bout the walrus and me
you know that we're as close as can be
well here's another clue for you all - the walrus is Paul.
Standing on the cast iron shore
Madonna trying to make ends meet
looking thru a glass onion.

I told you about the fool on the hill
I tell you man he's living there still
here's another place you can be listen to me.
looking thru a hole in the ocean
~~for a yellow submarine~~ trying to make a dovetail joint,
looking thru a glass onion.

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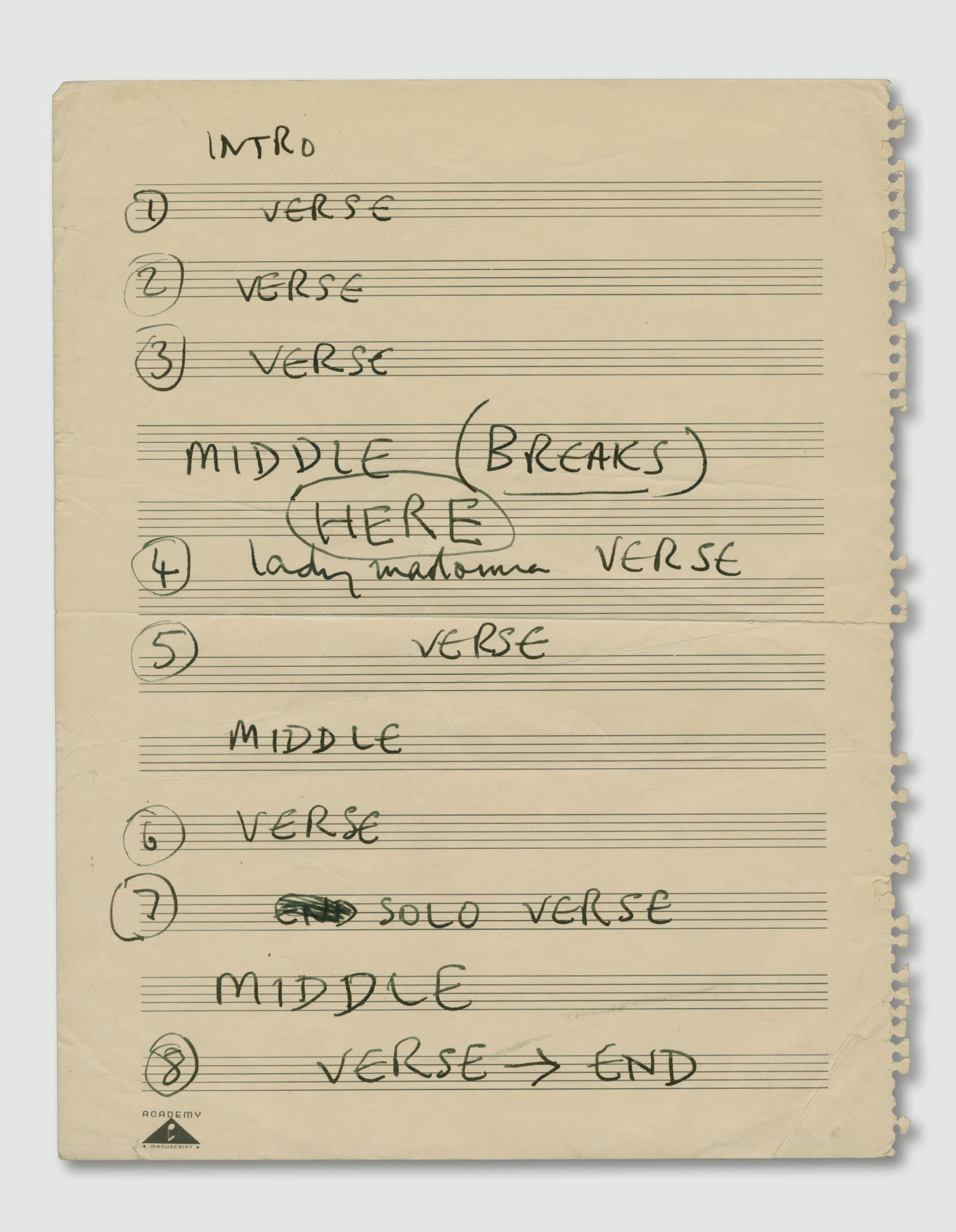


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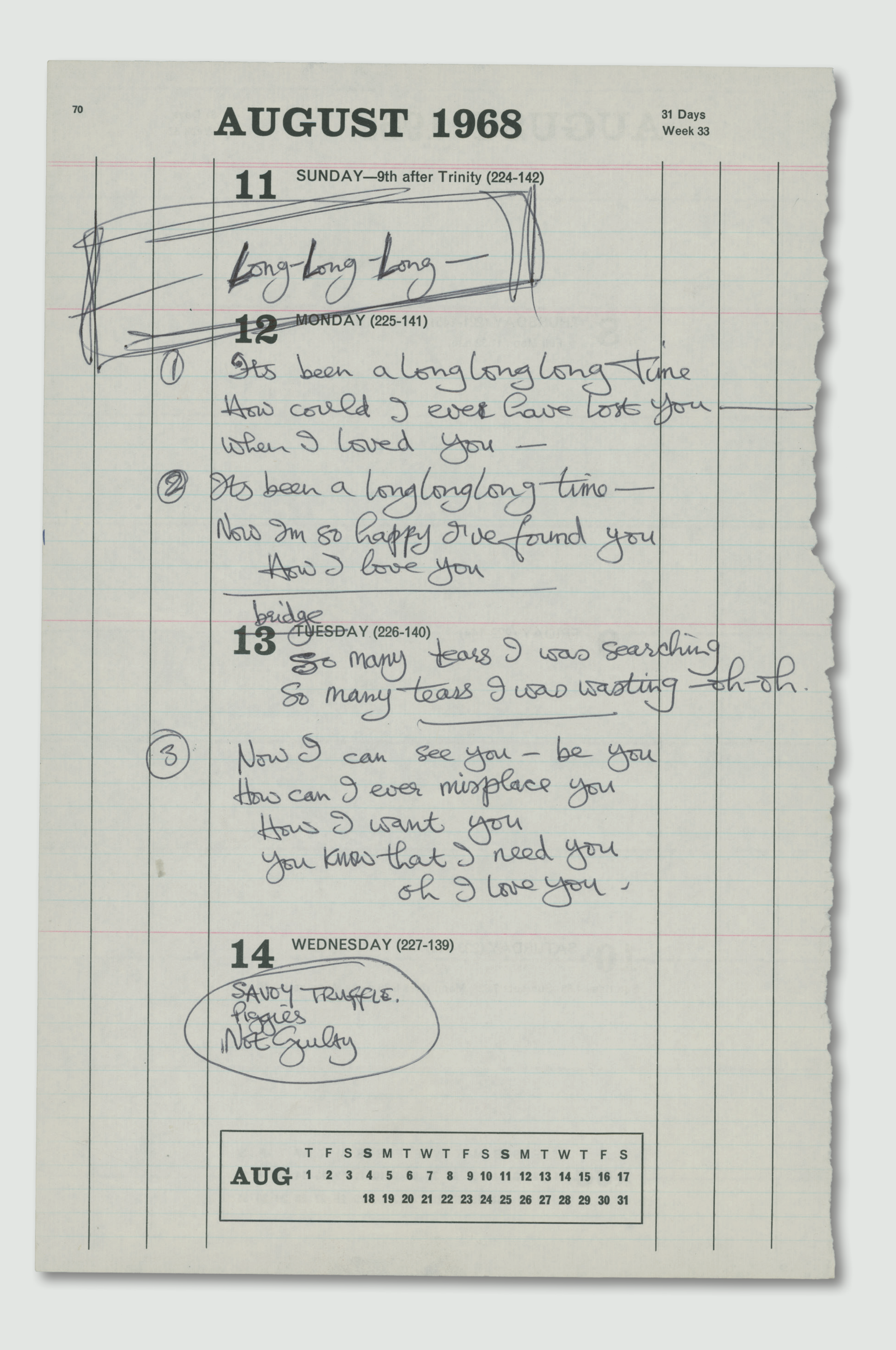
DEAR PRUDENCE

(1) DEAR PRUDENCE
won't you come out to play?
Dear Prudence
greet the brand new day?
the sun is up the sky is blue it's
beautiful and so are you
Dear Prudence
won't you come out to play?
(2) Dear Prudence open up your eyes
Dear Prudence see the sunny skies
the wind is low the birds will sing
that you are part of everything
Dear Prudence open up your eyes.
look around
let me see you smile
like a sleepy child
Clouds ~~up~~

Clouds ~~are~~ will be a daisy chain
so let me see you smile again
Dear Prudence
let me see you smile



INTRO
1 VERSE
2 VERSE
3 VERSE
MIDDLE (BREAKS)
HERE
4 lady madonna VERSE
5 VERSE
MIDDLE
6 VERSE
7 SOLO VERSE
MIDDLE
8 VERSE → END
ACADEMY



70
AUGUST 1968
31 Days
Week 33
11 SUNDAY—9th after Trinity (224-142)
Long-Long Long—
12 MONDAY (225-141)
① Its been a long long long time
How could I ever have lost you
When I loved you —
② Its been a long long long time —
Now I'm so happy I've found you
How I love you
bridge
13 TUESDAY (226-140)
So many tears I was searching
So many tears I was wasting oh-oh.
③ Now I can see you — be you
How can I ever misplace you
How I want you
You know that I need you
oh I love you.
14 WEDNESDAY (227-139)
SAVOY TRUFFLE.
Piggies
Not Guilty
AUG
T F S S M T W T F S S M T W T F S
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17
18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31

Band (Water Melon). children?

⑥ (the continuing story of) BUNGALOW BILL.

Hey Bungalow Bill
what did you kill
Bungalow Bill?

① He went ~~out [illegible]~~ hunting with his elephant
and gun
In case of accidents he always
took his mum
He's an all american bullet headed
saxon mother's sons
<u>all the children sing</u>

② Deep in the jungle where the mighty tiger
lies
~~Bill and~~ Roger Igor's his elephants were
taken by surprise
so captain marvel ~~[illegible]~~ zapped him right
between the eyes.
all the children sing.

(1) # JULIA

8 half of what I say is meaningless,
but I say it just to reach you
Julia.

8 when I cannot sing my heart
I can only speak my mind
Julia
~~[illegible]~~

(1). Beautiful Julia silent~~[illegible]~~ly
calls me so
(as) I sing a song of love forgiven
Julia
her hair like (in the saffron) shimmering
glimmering

HEY JUDE

(1) HEY JUDE DONT MAKE IT BAD
TAKE A SAD SONG AND MAKE IT BETTER
REMEMBER TO LET INTO YOUR HEART
THEN ~~AND~~ YOU CAN START TO MAKE IT BETTER (1)

—//—

HEY JUDE DONT BE AFRAID
(2) YOU WERE MADE TO GO OUT AND GET HER
~~REMEMBER~~ THE MINUTE YOU LET HER UNDER YOUR SKIN
THEN YOU BEGIN TO MAKE IT BETTER

—//—

AND ANY TIME YOU FEEL THE PAIN
HEY JUDE REFRAIN DONT CARRY THE WORLD UPON YOUR SHOULDER
FOR WELL YOU KNOW THAT ITS A FOOL WHO PLAYS IT COOL
BY MAKING HIS WORLD A LITTLE COLDER

—//—

(3) HEY JUDE DONT LET ME DOWN
SHE HAS FOUND YOU NOW GO AND GET HER
THE MINUTE YOU LET HER INTO YOUR HEART
THEN YOU CAN START TO MAKE IT BETTER

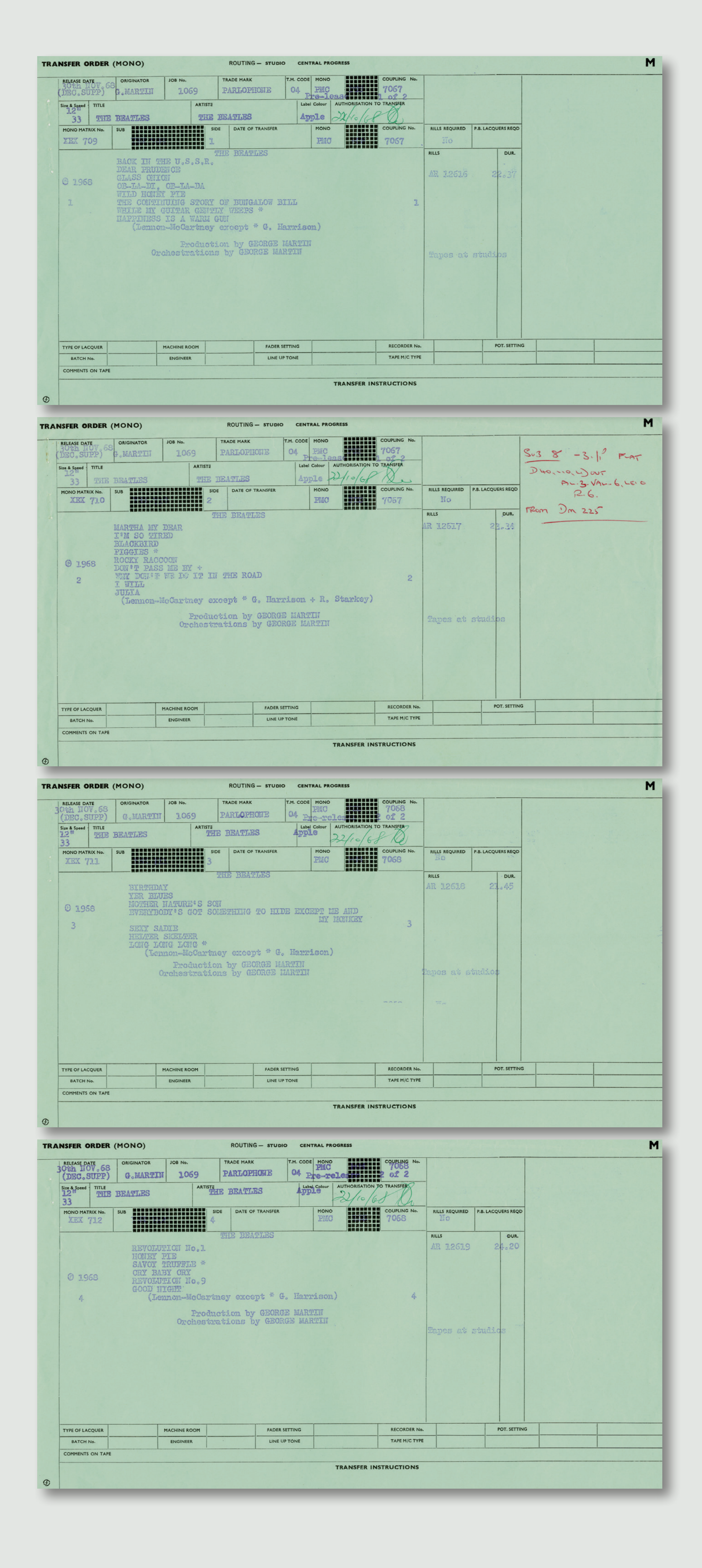
—//—

SO LET IT OUT AND LET IT IN
HEY JUDE ~~BEGIN~~ YOU'RE WAITING FOR SOMEONE TO
AND DONT YOU KNOW ~~THAT~~ ITS JUST YOU HEY JUDE YOU'LL DO
THE MOVEMENT YOU NEED IS ON YOUR SHOULDER

—//—

(4) (1) HEY JUDE DONT MAKE IT BAD
TAKE A SAD SONG AND MAKE IT BETTER
REMEMBER TO LET HER INTO YOUR HEART
THEN YOU CAN START TO MAKE IT BETTER

—//—



TRANSFER ORDER (MONO) ROUTING — STUDIO CENTRAL PROGRESS **M**

RELEASE DATE	ORIGINATOR	JOB No.	TRADE MARK	T.M. CODE	MONO		COUPLING No.
30th NOV.68 (DEC.SUPP)	G.MARTIN	1069	PARLOPHONE	04	PMC Pre-lease	[redacted]	7067 1 of 2

Size & Speed	TITLE	ARTISTE	Label Colour	AUTHORISATION TO TRANSFER
12" 33	THE BEATLES	THE BEATLES	Apple	22/10/68

MONO MATRIX No.	SUB	SIDE	DATE OF TRANSFER	MONO		COUPLING No.	RILLS REQUIRED	P.B. LACQUERS REQD
XEX 709	[redacted]	1		PMC	[redacted]	7067	No	

THE BEATLES

© 1968

1

BACK IN THE U.S.S.R.
DEAR PRUDENCE
GLASS ONION
OB-LA-DI, OB-LA-DA
WILD HONEY PIE
THE CONTINUING STORY OF BUNGALOW BILL
WHILE MY GUITAR GENTLY WEEPS *
HAPPINESS IS A WARM GUN
(Lennon-McCartney except * G. Harrison)

1

Production by GEORGE MARTIN
Orchestrations by GEORGE MARTIN

RILLS	DUR.
AR 12616	22.37

Tapes at studios

TYPE OF LACQUER | MACHINE ROOM | FADER SETTING | RECORDER No. | POT. SETTING
BATCH No. | ENGINEER | LINE UP TONE | TAPE M/C TYPE
COMMENTS ON TAPE

TRANSFER INSTRUCTIONS

TRANSFER ORDER (MONO) ROUTING — STUDIO CENTRAL PROGRESS **M**

RELEASE DATE	ORIGINATOR	JOB No.	TRADE MARK	T.M. CODE	MONO		COUPLING No.
30th NOV.68 (DEC.SUPP)	G.MARTIN	1069	PARLOPHONE	04	PMC Pre-lease	[redacted]	7067 1 of 2

Size & Speed	TITLE	ARTISTE	Label Colour	AUTHORISATION TO TRANSFER
12" 33	THE BEATLES	THE BEATLES	Apple	22/10/68

MONO MATRIX No.	SUB	SIDE	DATE OF TRANSFER	MONO		COUPLING No.	RILLS REQUIRED	P.B. LACQUERS REQD
XEX 710	[redacted]	2		PMC	[redacted]	7057	No	

Su3 8 -3.1° FLAT
D40,10,4Dout
AL-3-VAL-6,LC-0
R.6.
FROM Dm 225

THE BEATLES

© 1968

2

MARTHA MY DEAR
I'M SO TIRED
BLACKBIRD
PIGGIES *
ROCKY RACCOON
DON'T PASS ME BY +
WHY DON'T WE DO IT IN THE ROAD
I WILL
JULIA
(Lennon-McCartney except * G. Harrison + R. Starkey)

2

Production by GEORGE MARTIN
Orchestrations by GEORGE MARTIN

RILLS	DUR.
AR 12517	23.34

Tapes at studios

TYPE OF LACQUER | MACHINE ROOM | FADER SETTING | RECORDER No. | POT. SETTING
BATCH No. | ENGINEER | LINE UP TONE | TAPE M/C TYPE
COMMENTS ON TAPE

TRANSFER INSTRUCTIONS

TRANSFER ORDER (MONO) ROUTING — STUDIO CENTRAL PROGRESS **M**

RELEASE DATE	ORIGINATOR	JOB No.	TRADE MARK	T.M. CODE	MONO		COUPLING No.
30th NOV.68 (DEC.SUPP)	G.MARTIN	1069	PARLOPHONE	04	PMC Pre-relea	[redacted]	7068 2 of 2

Size & Speed	TITLE	ARTISTE	Label Colour	AUTHORISATION TO TRANSFER
12" 33	THE BEATLES	THE BEATLES	Apple	22/10/68

MONO MATRIX No.	SUB	SIDE	DATE OF TRANSFER	MONO		COUPLING No.	RILLS REQUIRED	P.B. LACQUERS REQD
XEX 711	[redacted]	3		PMC	[redacted]	7068	No	

THE BEATLES

© 1968

3

BIRTHDAY
YER BLUES
MOTHER NATURE'S SON
EVERYBODY'S GOT SOMETHING TO HIDE EXCEPT ME AND MY MONKEY
SEXY SADIE
HELTER SKELTER
LONG LONG LONG *
(Lennon-McCartney except * G. Harrison)

3

Production by GEORGE MARTIN
Orchestrations by GEORGE MARTIN

RILLS	DUR.
AR 12618	21.45

Tapes at studios

TYPE OF LACQUER | MACHINE ROOM | FADER SETTING | RECORDER No. | POT. SETTING
BATCH No. | ENGINEER | LINE UP TONE | TAPE M/C TYPE
COMMENTS ON TAPE

TRANSFER INSTRUCTIONS

TRANSFER ORDER (MONO) ROUTING — STUDIO CENTRAL PROGRESS **M**

RELEASE DATE	ORIGINATOR	JOB No.	TRADE MARK	T.M. CODE	MONO		COUPLING No.
30th NOV.68 (DEC.SUPP)	G.MARTIN	1069	PARLOPHONE	04	PMC Pre-relea	[redacted]	7068 2 of 2

Size & Speed	TITLE	ARTISTE	Label Colour	AUTHORISATION TO TRANSFER
12" 33	THE BEATLES	THE BEATLES	Apple	22/10/68

MONO MATRIX No.	SUB	SIDE	DATE OF TRANSFER	MONO		COUPLING No.	RILLS REQUIRED	P.B. LACQUERS REQD
XEX 712	[redacted]	4		PMC	[redacted]	7068	No	

THE BEATLES

© 1968

4

REVOLUTION No.1
HONEY PIE
SAVOY TRUFFLE *
CRY BABY CRY
REVOLUTION No.9
GOOD NIGHT
(Lennon-McCartney except * G. Harrison)

4

Production by GEORGE MARTIN
Orchestrations by GEORGE MARTIN

RILLS	DUR.
AR 12619	24.20

Tapes at studios

TYPE OF LACQUER | MACHINE ROOM | FADER SETTING | RECORDER No. | POT. SETTING
BATCH No. | ENGINEER | LINE UP TONE | TAPE M/C TYPE
COMMENTS ON TAPE

TRANSFER INSTRUCTIONS

Kevin Howlett

Track by Track

13.01.1968–16.10.1968

The Beatles began work on their new album at EMI Recording Studios in Abbey Road on 30 May 1968. Recording sessions occupied most of their time until the final date on 16 October – a 24-hour marathon to create the running order, and the edits and cross-fades between the 30 songs.

A week before 'The White Album' sessions began, Ringo was interviewed for Tony Palmer's TV documentary *All My Loving*. Sitting in front of a mixing desk at Abbey Road, he was asked about the innovative recording techniques The Beatles had pioneered: 'We have a special man who sits here and goes like this … and the guitar turns into a piano or something. Then you may say, "Why don't you use a piano?" Because the piano sounds like a guitar!' The sort of experimentation Ringo was joking about had reached its apogee in 1967 on landmark discs 'Strawberry Fields Forever', the *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* LP and 'I Am The Walrus'. The group's producer, George Martin, who played a key role in translating The Beatles' visions into reality, was an enthusiastic ally in what he described as 'painting in sound'. 'The ultimate aim of everybody [had once been] to try and recreate on records a live performance as accurately as possible,' he explained. 'We realised that we could do something other than that.'

What they did astounded their contemporaries and made an indelible impact on how pop music was recorded in the future. Having accomplished that, in a move typical of The Beatles, they chose to take another approach during 1968. 'The double album was a complete reversal from *Sgt. Pepper*,' John stated, 'and I preferred a lot of the music.' As revealed over the following pages, the contrast between the two projects was due mainly to the different way 'The White Album' was recorded. Rather than layering individually overdubbed parts on a multi-track tape, many of the songs made for their new album were recorded as group performances with a live lead vocal that would not be replaced at a later stage. This was a more straightforward method of recording than the studio complexity pursued during the derring-do days devoted to *Sgt. Pepper*.

Overall, the group's guiding principle was to favour simplicity. Whereas in the previous year, 'Blackbird' and 'Julia' might have been arranged for strings, in 1968 each was left as a solo voice / guitar performance with minimal embellishment. Speaking at the time of its release, Paul saw 'The White Album' as 'another step, but it's not necessarily in the way people expected. On *Sgt. Pepper* we had more orchestral stuff than we'd



Photos by Tony Bramwell



ever used before so it was more of a production. But this time we didn't really want to go overboard on that and we've tried to play more like a band.' Of course, there are tracks for which George Martin's sophisticated scores are integral to the production, for example, his lush orchestration for 'Good Night' and his note-perfect reproduction of a jazz orchestra for 'Honey Pie'. In addition to his surefootedness with pastiche, his arrangements for 'Glass Onion' and 'Piggies' are as brilliantly inventive as any of the previous scores he had written for The Beatles.

Nevertheless, the working relationship between the group and their producer had altered. Referring to the year's tempestuous political climate, George Martin observed in 1968, 'It's rather like the students revolting in France. Youth is realising its power. I was very much the boss and they were the pupils. This naturally changed with their success and power. They want more say about what goes on.' In particular, the group's newly adopted method of recording a large number of takes of a song, all through the night, was time consuming and exhausting for their producer. After all, George had other duties during the daytime, including the running of AIR – Associated Independent Recording – with fellow producers Ron Richards, John Burgess and Peter Sullivan. He had also composed the orchestral score for The Beatles' animated feature film *Yellow Submarine*, released in July 1968. After three months of work on the new album had gone by, with still no end in sight, George Martin took a three-week holiday away from it all in the Aeolian Islands. He entrusted the sessions to his young assistant Chris Thomas and balance engineer Ken Scott.

On 18 July 1968, Ken had been happy to take the place of Geoff Emerick, who says he was compelled to abandon the sessions because he could no longer tolerate their toxic atmosphere. A month later, Ringo was absent from the studio for eleven days. Yet both Ken and Chris Thomas have stressed how 'The White Album' sessions have been wrongly characterised as being continually tense and miserable. 'When you're in the studio five or six days a week and spend hours and hours with the same people, at times you're going to rub each other [up] the wrong way,' Ken Scott wrote in his book *Abbey Road to Ziggy Stardust*. 'There were definitely times when things blew up, but it was *nowhere* near as bad as it's been reported over and over.' 'Please let people know that we had such a lot of fun,' Chris Thomas said in Ken's book. '[The Beatles] were so funny and so much fun to be around.' While there is hardly any evidence of acrimony during the hundreds of hours recorded on tape during 1968, a great deal of good humour shines through the sessions – as heard on the outtakes in this box set. Nine months after he had quit, Geoff Emerick was welcomed back to the fold to work on The Beatles' final recordings released on *Abbey Road*.

'The White Album' was the last Beatles LP for which separate mono and stereo mixes were made from the multi-track tapes. In the recording details that follow, the dates shown for mono and stereo mixes refer to when the final master version was made. The information about how the songs were recorded was researched mainly from two sources. First, all the digital 192kHz/24-bit copies of the original four-track and eight-track session tapes were carefully listened to, which led to some exciting discoveries of undocumented rehearsal recordings. Second, access to the Abbey Road archive of tape boxes and studio paperwork – some of it recently found – has proved invaluable. In some instances, the discovery of new material has meant that previous accounts of the sessions will differ from those in this book. Throughout, there are indications of which track on this box set's Sessions CDs features a particular stage of the recording process as described in this chapter.

Emitape

AB 0317371

TAPE NO VOL 17 IDENTITY JET & PISTON ENGINE AEROPLANE.

MATRIX NO	TITLE	TAKE	START	FINISH	MASTER	REMARKS
1	X TAKE OFF BY VC10 JET.	(SOME AIR BLAST ON MIKE)				STEREO
2	" " " TRIDENT "					
3	LANDING					
4	"					
5	" PROP PISTON ENGINE.					
	JET PLANE ~~NOISES~~ VICOUNT TAKING OFF	X				
1	JET PLANE PASSING OVERHEAD					
2	JET PLANE LANDING.					
3	REVVING UP ON APRON & TAXIEING TO RUNWAY	~~THEN TAKE~~ OFF				
4	TAXIEING FROM RUNWAY ON TO APRON & PAST	ENGINE RUN DOWN	X			
5	CONTROL ROOM LONDON AIRPORT.					
6	JET INTERIOR DURING FLIGHT. X					
7	JET CRASH					
8	JET PASSING THRO SOUND BARRIER – Red Leader – 10 Genuine Sonic Booms. Recorded 21/7/61					
9	FARNBOROUGH AIR SHOW. P.A ANNOUNCER & VARIOUS PLANES. ← (DELETED)					GOOD FOR JETS 5211 FLYING OVER NEAR END
RED LEADER 10	PISTON ENGINE AIR LINER INTERIOR.					
11	PISTON ENGINE PLANE. START UP ENGINE / TICK OVER / REV UP / SHUT OFF / STOP					
12	" " START UP REV UP & TAKE OFF					
13	" " PASSING OVER SEVERAL TIMES IN FLIGHT					
14	" " APPROACH & LANDS. TAXI UP / SHUT OFF MOTOR					
15	" " ZOOM OVER & DIVE					
16	" " DIVE & CRASH					
17	PISTON ENGINE. PLANE FROM INSIDE OPEN COCKPIT DURING FLIGHT.					
18	HELICOPTER. START ENGINE / RUN ENGINE & BLADES / STOP ENGINE / BLADES RUN DOWN.					
19	LONDON AIRPORT. NOISES MAIN CONCOURSE & APRON { JETS / PEOPLE ANNOUNCER. } STEREO					
~~20~~	~~[illegible]~~					
20	~~[illegible]~~ ANNOUNCING FLIGHT BY ~~[illegible]~~ HOSTESS OVER PA IN LOUNGE.					

MACHINE No. STUDIO

TAPE LENGTH FT.

TAPE SPEED 15 IPS.

TAPE TYPE

RECORDING ENGINEER

DATE

Back In The U.S.S.R. 22.08.1968

Paul describes the origin of 'Back In The U.S.S.R.' as a 'tongue-in-cheek take-off' of the 1959 single 'Back In The U.S.A' by Chuck Berry. That record begins by expressing the elation felt when a plane touches down after a 'jet-propelled' flight from overseas and then lists favourite places and American amenities yearned for while abroad: New York, Los Angeles, Chattanooga, Baton Rouge, drive-ins, hamburger joints, jukeboxes. Paul's song is about 'a Russian who hasn't got a lot, but is still every bit as proud as an American would be'. That character is returning to the Soviet Union after an uncomfortable flight with BOAC (now called British Airways) from Miami Beach – the sunny Florida resort where The Beatles made their second appearance on *The Ed Sullivan Show* in February 1964. 'He's come the other way. He can't wait to get back home,' Paul elucidates.

Written in India, while The Beatles were with Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, the parody has another aspect prompted by a fellow Transcendental Meditation student in Rishikesh. Mike Love of The Beach Boys suggested writing in the style of his group's hit 'California Girls' to describe the allure of the girls in the USSR. While doing so, Paul made a punning reference to the Hoagy Carmichael and Stuart Gorrell standard 'Georgia On My Mind'. 'It's just about a spy who's been in America a long, long time,' Paul revealed in a Radio Luxembourg interview broadcast in November 1968. 'He's [become] very American. But he gets back to the USSR and he's saying, "Leave it till tomorrow to unpack my case, Honey, disconnect the phone." You see, it concerns the attributes of Russian women.'

It may have started out as a jokey song, but it was soon interpreted in more serious ways. In the USA, the ultra-conservative John Birch Society cited the track as further evidence of The Beatles' pro-Soviet sympathies. In his 1974 book *Communism, Hypnotism and The Beatles*, the Reverend David A. Noebel asserted that 'The Beatles were an integral part of the revolutionary milieu and received high marks from the Communist press, especially for the White Album which contained "Back In The U.S.S.R.".' In fact, any Soviet acknowledgement of The Beatles' existence would have depicted them as an example of Western decadence. Young people in the republic were desperate to hear The Beatles, however, and took great risks to copy the banned music smuggled in from the West. Surreptitiously distributed, there were records that had been etched into discarded X-ray film – surely, the strangest picture discs ever – and reel-to-reel tape copies of copies of copies. Yuri Pelyushonok, the author of *Strings for a Beatle Bass: The Beatles Generation in the USSR*, described the excitement when Soviet fans found out about 'Back In The U.S.S.R.': 'The song started a legend that The Beatles actually landed in Soviet territory on their way to Japan and, as they were not allowed to leave the plane, they gave a concert on the wing of the plane, playing acoustic guitars.'

In 1988, Paul released an album of rock 'n' roll favourites, entitled *Back In The USSR*, on the Russian state-owned Melodiya label. The sleeve contained a heartfelt message: 'When I was young, I asked my Dad if people wanted peace. He said to me, "Yes, people everywhere want peace – it's usually politicians that cause trouble." It always seemed to me that the way The Beatles' music was admired in the USSR tended to prove his point that people the world over have a great deal in common. In releasing this record exclusively in the Soviet Union, I extend the hand of peace and friendship to the people of the USSR.' On 24 May 2003, Paul and his band played 'Back In The U.S.S.R.' to 100,000 people packed into Red Square in Moscow. For many who had first heard the Beatles on illicit tape copies or X-ray records, it was an event they could have only dreamed about before the collapse of the Soviet Union on 26 December 1991.

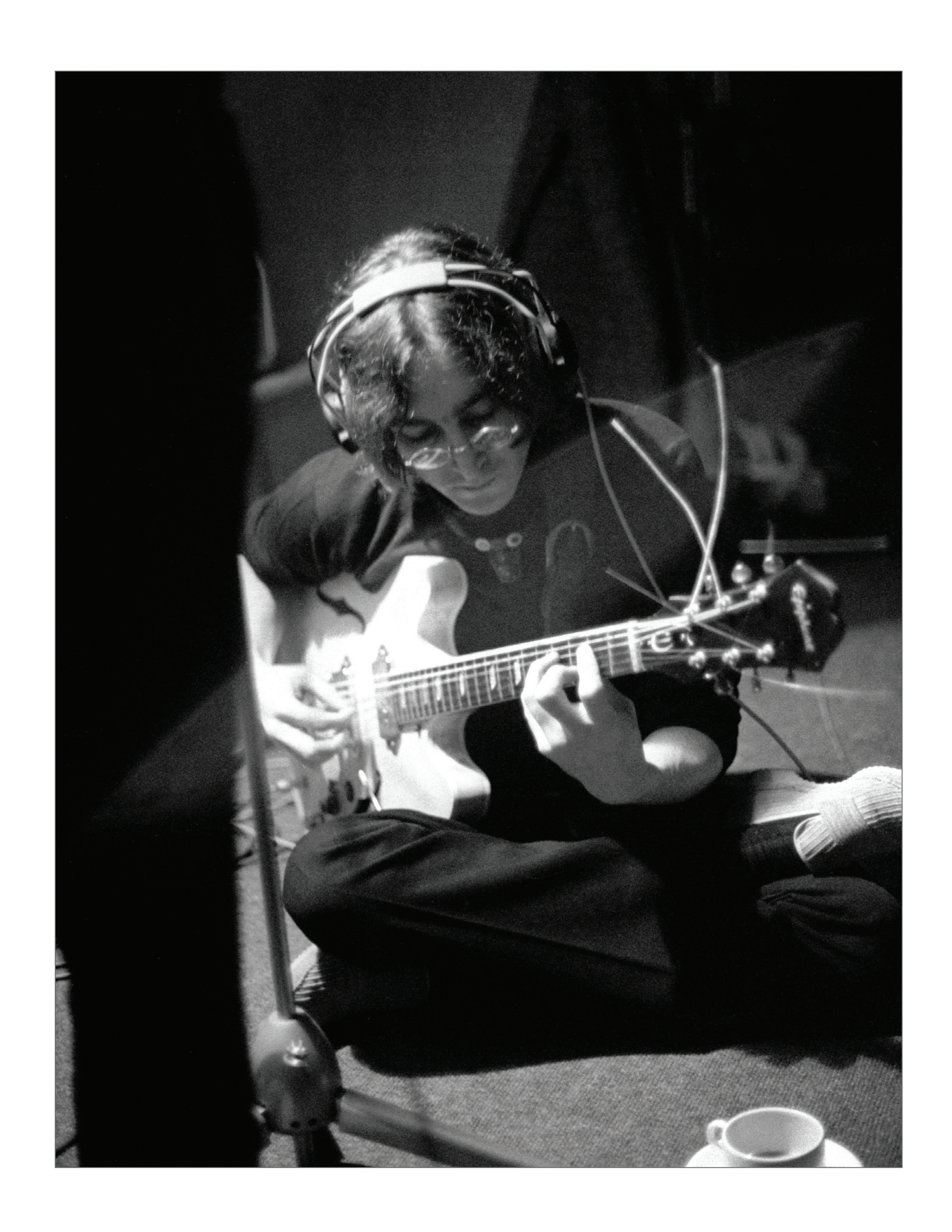
Recording details:
Recorded: 22 and 23 August 1968 – Studio Two, Abbey Road
Mono Mix: 23 August 1968 – *Stereo Mix:* 13 October 1968

Paul: lead vocal, backing vocal, guitar, bass, piano, main drums, handclaps, percussion :
John: backing vocal, guitar, bass, drums, handclaps, percussion :
George: backing vocal, guitar, bass, drums, handclaps, percussion :

The exuberant spirit of 'Back In The U.S.S.R.' betrays no hint of the circumstances surrounding its creation. It has the brio of a united group performance but, in fact, for this recording, now there were three. Ringo had walked out of the first session for the song and, seemingly, quit The Beatles. The approach to recording some of the new songs had involved performing them repeatedly. For example, just two weeks before this night, the total of takes logged for 'Not Guilty' went over the 100 mark. Through them all, Ringo could be relied upon to unwaveringly hold down the beat and keep reproducing his inimitable drum fills. It seems that when Paul dictated a particular drum part for 'Back In The U.S.S.R.', Ringo's patience finally evaporated. He joked about Paul's keen interest in his territory in the 2004 book *Postcards from the Boys*: 'Every time I went for a cup of tea he was on the drums!' Ringo took off for a much-needed break in the Mediterranean on a yacht owned by actor Peter Sellers. Ken Scott's recollection of this uncertain time was that it was 'not spoken about too much … and the whole thing was treated just as a "Ringo's not here today" kind of thing, so we just carried on as usual.'

Missing Ringo, the others all contributed to the drums heard on the final version of 'Back In The U.S.S.R.'. Through necessity, the master take was constructed layer by layer – a process they had often adopted during sessions for *Sgt. Pepper*. The first parts recorded on track one of the first tape were Paul playing guitar while George hit a snare drum. 'I've been wonderful on the last two takes!' George laughed. After a later take in the session, when he was asked 'How was that?' George Martin replied, 'George, I think you're giving me less bass drum.' During the takes to build a rhythm track, John played a six-string bass, strumming chords rather than picking individual notes and Paul pounded and pumped the piano. Take five (**CD Five – Sessions Track 10**) was transferred to another tape with all the instrumental elements mixed to tracks one and two. Take six included the singing and handclaps recorded onto the vacated tracks three and four. Paul sang the lead vocal, double-tracked in places. To emulate the harmonies of The Beach Boys, as heard on hits such as 'I Get Around' and 'Help Me, Rhonda', John sang the 'da-da-da-da' bass part while Paul and George hit the high notes.

The sound of a Viscount turboprop airliner was added when the song was mixed to mono at the end of the second session. A tape loop had been made from a copied section of *Volume 17: Jet and Piston Engine Aeroplane* in the Abbey Road collection. Running on a separate tape machine, the whine of the jet turbines was faded up and down while the song played. Second engineer / 'tape-op' John Smith recalled that 'for the mono mix everything came out OK, but the stereo mix took a long, long time and I was holding the pencil to keep the effects tape taut. I guess I must have been leaning back on it and started to stretch it, because the mono has this clear, clean lovely jet sound while the stereo is an abomination of a jet sound.' By the end of the stereo mix, the sound of the Viscount had been transformed into an icy wind whistling across a Siberian steppe.



'Our thing is just rocking,' John declared when 'The White Album' was released. 'You know, the usual gig. That's what this new record is about – definitely rocking.' 'It's a return to a more rock 'n' roll sound,' Paul agreed. 'We felt it was time to step back, because that's what we wanted to do.' The first song on side one clearly signalled that intent within moments of the needle landing in the groove.

Dear Prudence

28.08.1968

Several weeks before The Beatles' arrival at the Maharishi's retreat, Prudence Farrow had travelled to Rishikesh with her older sister Mia and brother John. Prudence had first studied Transcendental Meditation at the University of California in Los Angeles in 1966. 'I needed to find peace, true peace inside myself,' she wrote in *Dear Prudence: The Story Behind the Song*. 'I had dreamed of coming here to meditate for almost two years and finally it was happening.'

Her earnest devotion to meditation concerned the other residents. 'Prudence meditated and hibernated,' Ringo remembered. 'We saw her twice in the two weeks I was there. Everyone would be banging on the door – "Are you still alive?"' At the end of the Esher demo version of 'Dear Prudence', John says, 'All the people around her were very worried about the girl, because she was going insane, so we sang to her.' Prudence Farrow admits that 'they were all serious about what they were doing, but they just weren't as fanatical as me. I knew that I must have stuck out, because I would always rush straight back to my room after lectures and meals so that I could meditate. The song that John wrote was just saying, "Come out and play with us. Come out and have fun."'

Unlike The Beatles, Prudence completed the course to become a qualified teacher of Transcendental Meditation. In addition to teaching and academic studies – she holds BA, MA and PhD degrees – she has been involved in the production of various theatrical and film projects. In the prologue to her memoir, she advises that: 'My generation is passing the mantle. Practise meditation. Create a better, peaceful world starting with yourself.'

During free time between lectures and meditation in India, The Beatles played music with Beach Boy Mike Love and Donovan and, clearly, the prevalence of acoustic guitars influenced the writing and recording of several of the songs on 'The White Album'. Steeped in a folk club background, Donovan had learnt from guitar virtuosos such as Davey Graham and Bert Jansch. The finger-picking pattern favoured by Donovan and the common technique among folk players of dropping the guitar's lower E-string to D when playing in D major were both adopted by John for 'Dear Prudence'. As Paul reflected, 'It was a folk picking style and John was the only one in the band who could ever do that properly. I made my own variation.'

Recording details:
Recorded: 28, 29 and 30 August 1968 – Trident Studios
Mono Mix: 13 October 1968 – *Stereo Mix:* 13 October 1968

John: lead vocal, backing vocal, electric guitar, tambourine :
Paul: backing vocal, bass, piano, drums, flugelhorn, handclaps :
George: backing vocal, lead guitar, handclaps :

Additional Instruments:
Mal Evans: tambourine :
Mal Evans, Jackie Lomax, John McCartney: backing vocals, handclaps :

Ringo was still afloat in the Mediterranean when John, Paul and George moved to Trident to take advantage of the independent studio's eight-track machine. They had previously worked on 'Hey Jude' there and Paul and George had also used the Soho studio for sessions with artists signed to Apple Records. Either Trident did not maintain the sort of meticulous paperwork for recordings that EMI staff assiduously completed during sessions or, if they did, it has not been preserved. All that remains from the three Trident sessions to reveal the recording history of 'Dear Prudence' is one take on an eight-track tape.

The initial recordings during the first hard day's night – 5.00pm to 7.00am – are thought to be Paul playing drums on track six, George's 'distorted' guitar on seven and John's finger-picked guitar on eight. CD Five – Sessions Track 11 is a mix of tracks six and eight along with John's double-tracked vocals and other parts from subsequent sessions. Additional layering took place during a 7.00pm to 6.00am stretch that began on 29 August and a final, six-hour booking on 30 August. The overdubbed parts filled tracks one to five. John's singing is on track three. Another guitar part played by George, plus a jangling piano and a few blasts of flugelhorn both played by Paul are on four; his bass part and a tambourine were mixed together on five. Backing vocals and handclaps appear on tracks one and two. The hand clappers, who included Mal Evans, Paul's cousin John McCartney and Apple artist Jackie Lomax, gave themselves an enthusiastic round of applause at the end of their task. This was omitted when the final mono and stereo mixes of 'Dear Prudence' were made at Abbey Road in October.

Glass Onion

11.09.1968

Written as a little dig at those who searched Beatles records for hidden meanings, 'Glass Onion' makes allusions to 'Strawberry Fields Forever', 'I Am The Walrus', 'Lady Madonna', 'The Fool On The Hill' and 'Fixing A Hole'. When the demo version was recorded at George's house in Esher, John had written only one verse, which he repeated twice. By the time 'Glass Onion' was recorded three months later at Abbey Road, two more verses had been added. Paul remembered in his book *Many Years from Now* that 'John and Yoko came round and he and I went out into the garden for half an hour, because there were a couple of things he needed me to finish up. But it was his song and his idea.'

Paul remembered that they deliberately decided to cause some confusion: 'We had a fun moment when we were working on the bit, "Here's another clue for you all, the Walrus was Paul". What John meant was that in *Magical Mystery Tour*, when we came to do the costumes on 'I Am The Walrus', it happened to be me in the walrus costume. People read things into our songs and little legends grew up about every item of so-called significance, so on this occasion we decided to plant one.' John offered two other thoughts about that line. In an interview with David Sheff in 1980, he said, 'It could've been "The fox terrier is Paul". It's just a bit of poetry. That's me just doing a throwaway song.' Then again, reprising an idea he had expressed to Jann Wenner in 1970, he also felt that 'the line was put in partly because I was feeling guilty, because I was with Yoko and I was leaving Paul.'

The lyric contains several phrases that might seem like surreal word-play, but which were in fact grounded in reality. The Cast Iron Shore was a beach in Liverpool; a dovetail joint was remembered from school woodwork classes; a glass onion was a type of globe for a light. Even the 'bent-back tulips' were featured in a flower arrangement John came across in the upmarket Parkes restaurant in London. The Beatles'

RECORDING SHEET

MONO/~~STEREO~~ - STRAFEX

Sheet: 1 of: 1 Class: POP Overall Title: STRAFEX

Date of Session: 11 SEPTEMBER 1968 Job No: 1069

ARTISTIC INFORMATION

ARTISTE(S) AND/OR CAST: THE BEATLES

CONDUCTOR:
ORCHESTRA:
ACCOMPANIMENT:
ART. DEPT. REP.: MᶜC. THOMAS

COSTING INFORMATION

MATERIALS USED: 3x88 (1")
SESSION BOOKED TIME: 7-12
SESSION ACTUAL: 7-3.30
SET-UP/PLAYBACK: ½
ORDER NUMBER:
COMPANY:
STUDIO/CONTROL ROOM: 2-2
ENGINEERS: KS-JS

TITLES and MATRIX Nos.	AUTHOR/COMPOSER/PUBLISHER	REEL NUMBERS	FALSE STARTS	TAKE No.	TAKE DETAILS FROM	TO	DUR.	M	REMARKS
GLASS ONION		E70341 (STRAFEX)	1-4	5	COMPLETE		1.49		
				6	"		1.50		
			7-8	9	"		1.55		
				10	"		1.55		
				11	"		1.55		
			12-13	14	"		1.50		
				15	"		6.07		
			16-17		"				
GLASS ONIONS		E70342 (STRAFEX)	18-20	21	"		1.55		
				22	"		2.10		
				23	"		1.55		
				24	"		2.00		
			25	26	"		1.55		
			27	28	"		1.50		
			29	30	"		1.50		
				31	"		1.50		
GLASS ONIONS		E70343 (STRAFEX)		32	"		1.55		
				33	"		1.50	BEST	
				34	"		1.49		

Ref. 9864

RECORDING SHEET

MONO/STEREO 4T

Sheet: 1 of: Class: POP Overall Title: 4TSI

Date of Session: 11-7-68 Job No: 1069

ARTISTIC INFORMATION

ARTISTE(S) AND/OR CAST: BEATLES

CONDUCTOR:
ORCHESTRA:
ACCOMPANIMENT:
ART. DEPT. REP.: G.H. MARTIN.

COSTING INFORMATION

MATERIALS USED: 1 x 811 (4T)
SESSION BOOKED TIME: 2.30-5.30
SESSION ACTUAL: 4-3.45
SET-UP/PLAYBACK: ¼hr
ORDER NUMBER:
COMPANY:
STUDIO/CONTROL ROOM: 3-3
ENGINEERS: GERL

TITLES and MATRIX Nos.	AUTHOR/COMPOSER/PUBLISHER	REEL NUMBERS	FALSE STARTS	TAKE No.	TAKE DETAILS FROM	TO	DUR.	M	REMARKS
REVOLUTION.		E 69176 4T.		15			3.22	Best	SI PIANO ONTRK. 4.
~~[illegible]~~									
OB-LA-DI, OB-LA DA.		E. 69175 4T.		T. 22.	SI(1) COMPLETE.		3.13.	BEST.	SI SAXES TR. 3
REVOLUTION 4T-4T. OF TAKE (15)		E 69176	TO	16	COMPLETE.				BEST (4T) E 69181.
OB.LA.DI - OB.LA DA 4T-4T. T.22 SI BASS ON BOTH TITLES.		E 69175	TO	23	COMPLETE.				BEST 4T E 69181. OB-LA-DI, OB-LA-DA REVOLUTION
		SI		1	COMPLETE.				
		SI		1	"				
ROUGH RM OF OB-LA-DI, OB-LA-DA. + COPY TAPE.		E 69182.	RM RM	1 2	COMPLETE. COPY OF RM(1).				1 x 811 ¼"

friend and sometime employee Derek Taylor told writer Steve Turner that 'This is what John meant by "See how the other half lives". He meant seeing how the other half of the flower lives – you could see the obverse side of the petals and also the stamen – but also, because it was an expensive restaurant, how the other half of society lived.'

Recording details:
Recorded: 11, 12, 13 and 16 September 1968 – Studio Two, Abbey Road
Mono Mix: 10 October 1968 – *Stereo Mix:* 10 October 1968

John: lead vocal, acoustic guitar :
Paul: bass, piano, recorder :
George: electric guitar :
Ringo: drums, tambourine :

Additional Instruments:
Chris Thomas: recorder – *Recorded:* 16 September 1968
Four violins, two violas, two cellos – *Recorded:* 10 October 1968

George Martin was on holiday for most of September 1968. His assistant, Chris Thomas, who had been part of the recording team since May, unexpectedly found himself the designated producer when he returned from his own break. 'Ken Scott was engineering. He was 21. I was 21. The tape op was probably 20,' Chris Thomas recalled. 'Here we were with the biggest band on the planet. It was ridiculous!' Comments heard on the tapes show he had earned the trust of the group. 'What do you think upstairs, Chris?' John enquired after a take of 'Glass Onion'.

Using an eight-track machine to record the core parts for 'Glass Onion', Paul's bass was on track one; drums were on two; electric guitar played by George was on three; and John's acoustic guitar and an audible guide vocal were on track four. CD Five – Sessions Track 16 is take ten. As he had done through the majority of the 34 recorded takes, John can be heard experimenting with variations of the words. 'The Fool On The Hill' was not yet 'living there still'. During the session, he might be standing, sitting or living. Similarly, 'The walrus and me' were 'nice', 'cool', 'keen' or 'close as can be'. 'Looking through a hole in the ocean' did not become 'fixing a hole in the ocean' until the next night's overdubbed vocal. Although John had commented that take 32 'sounds about right', Paul recommended 'one more'. Although they did try another performance after take 33, they chose their penultimate performance as the master.

Over the next two nights, the remaining four tracks of the tape were used for John's double-tracked vocal (on five and seven), tambourine, piano, Mellotron and Ringo double-tracking the snare drum hits in the breaks. During the session to record 'I Will', Paul and Chris Thomas played together a brief phrase on recorders that was dropped into 'Glass Onion' after John's reference to 'The Fool On The Hill' – the *Magical Mystery Tour* song that featured that instrument.
Ten days later, a mono mix was made featuring tape loops of a telephone ringing, glass smashing and football commentator Kenneth Wolstenholme's exclamation: 'It's a goal!' That mix, first released on *Anthology 3* in 1996, makes another musical reference to a previous recording – 'Strawberry Fields Forever' – by including in the first verse some notes from a Mellotron using the flute setting. When George Martin returned from his holiday, he proposed a more formal idea than the loops. The sound effects and Mellotron were wiped and replaced by a string octet playing a rhythmic score that winds eerily to a close after the song's sudden ending.

Ob-La-Di, Ob-La-Da

03.07.1968

There have been many popular songs with seemingly nonsense titles. 'Be-Bop-A-Lula', 'Da Doo Ron Ron' or 'Ooby Dooby' may be meaningless, but each works within the context of the song. Certainly, when Little Richard yelled 'Awopbopaloobop Alopbamboom' on his 1956 recording of 'Tutti Frutti', teenagers knew just how he felt. Long before then, scat-singing jazz vocalists had swung strings of syllables together. For example, jive-talking Slim Gaillard was celebrated by Jack Kerouac in his novel *On the Road*: '"Great-orooni … fine-ovauti … hello-orooni…" He keeps this up for fifteen minutes.' From the same bop era of the late 1940s, Benny Goodman and Dizzy Gillespie both recorded the Marion Williams and Milt Orent song '(In The Land Of) Oo-Bla-Dee' – a hip jazz fairy tale.

Paul picked up on the phrase 'Ob-la-di, ob-la-da' through his friendship with the flamboyant Nigerian conga player Jimmy Anonmuogharan Scott Emuakpor. Known as Jimmy Scott, he had emigrated to the UK in the 1950s and found a niche in the nascent British jazz and blues scene. In the 1960s, he was a member of Georgie Fame's Blue Flames. 'I used to meet him in the clubs in London. Every time we met he'd say, "Ob-la-di, ob-la-da, life goes on, bra,"' Paul recalled. 'He was a real cool guy and I said to him, "I really like that expression and I'm thinking of using it." I sent him a cheque in recognition of that fact later, because even though I had written the whole song and he didn't help me, it was his expression.'

The rhythmic groove of 'Ob-La-Di, Ob-La-Da' was inspired by the imported Jamaican ska records spun in UK nightclubs in the mid 1960s. The first ska record to make it into the mainstream was 'My Boy Lollipop' by Millie – an irresistible number two hit in the UK and US in 1964. Sometimes called blue-beat, because of the name of the label on which many ska records were released, the style was a forerunner of reggae music. John recalled in 1980 that the first time The Beatles had made 'a deliberate and conscious attempt at ska [was] in the middle, the solo on "I Call Your Name" [recorded in 1964]. "Ob-La-Di" was semi-semi [ska].'

Paul's lyric unfolds a story in a similar manner to his later tune 'Maxwell's Silver Hammer'. 'It's a very *me* song,' he acknowledges. 'Inasmuch as it's a fantasy about a couple of people who don't really exist, Desmond and Molly. I'm keen on names too. Desmond is a very Caribbean name.' When 'Ob-La-Di, Ob-La-Da' was recorded at Abbey Road, the only change from the lyric heard on the demo recorded in Esher was a line delivered by accident when Paul repeated the last verse. 'Desmond stays at home and does his pretty face' introduced an amusing tangent and so was not corrected.

Recording details:
Version One:
Recorded: 3–5 July 1968 – Studio Two, Abbey Road

Version Two:
Recorded: 8 and 9 July 1968 – Studio Two, Abbey Road; 11 July – Studio Three, Abbey Road; 15 July 1968 – Studio Two, Abbey Road

Version Three:
Recorded: 9 July 1968 – Studio Three, Abbey Road



Photo by Linda McCartney

Additional Instruments Version One:
Three saxophones
Jimmy Scott: conga drum
Recorded: 5 July 1968

Additional Instruments Version Two:
Three saxophones – *Recorded:* 11 July 1968

Mono Mix: 12 October 1968 – *Stereo Mix:* 12 October 1968

Paul: vocal, bass part on distorted acoustic guitar, electric bass, percussion, handclaps :
John: backing vocals, piano, handclaps :
George: backing vocals, acoustic guitar, handclaps :
Ringo: drums, conga drum, maracas, percussion, handclaps :

Written in India, the song was played at sing-songs in Rishikesh. 'We went down to the village one evening when they were showing a film,' Paul remembered. 'The travelling cinema came around and we all walked down as a procession through a path in the jungle from the meditation camp. It was very, very pleasant singing "Ob-La-Di, Ob-La-Da" with my guitar.' The Esher demo version retains that carefree, busking approach. When it was time to record the song at Abbey Road, the goals were to make the performance sound spontaneous and also to have a Caribbean ska rhythm at its bedrock.

During the first session, there were seven takes of 'Ob-La-Di, Ob-La-Da' with all The Beatles present. To maintain energy, George announced, 'I'm standing up this time,' then added, with a reference to a Duane Eddy instrumental, 'I'm "Movin' 'n' Groovin"!' The group then strummed a snatch of The Everly Brothers' first hit 'Bye Bye Love'. Acoustic guitars dominated the performances throughout this session. Paul mimicked the percussive vocal mannerisms he heard on ska records – 'shack-a-boom, shack-a-boom' – and on 5 July an overdub on track three of take five added three saxophones and a conga drum played by Jimmy Scott, whose jive-talking had inspired the words of the chorus. Later in the evening, a piccolo was recorded on track two. This was wiped when Paul added a bass part, which was played on an acoustic guitar. 'One trick of ours,' he revealed, 'was to over-record an acoustic guitar, so you'd swing the needle into the red and it'd be there, hard, every time you'd played it. The acoustic would come back like an electric. It wouldn't distort too much, it would just mess around with that original sound. It'd make it hot.'

'Rough remix given to Paul McCartney' was written on the recording sheet for Friday 5 July. Having listened to it over the weekend, Paul felt that they should try a different approach when they returned on Monday 8 July. The song was not played faster than their previous version, but was given a different feel by John switching to piano. 'He sat down at the piano and instantly played the blue-beat style intro,' Paul remembers. 'It turned us on and turned the whole song around. I remember the two of us in the studio having a whale of a time.' Take 12 was marked 'best' and bounced down to another four-track tape to become take 13 with vocals added to tracks three and four. At the end of the night's work, Paul took away a rough mix of that version to listen to in the cold light of day.

When the group returned for the next day's session, the corresponding tape box was marked with the words 'Re-remake' after the song title. As they embarked on another round of takes, from the piano stool John implored, 'Don't break down, lads! Don't break down!' before counting off the next performance in German. Take 21 had drums, guitar and piano on track one; a bass part on distorted acoustic guitar with a snare drum on track two and vocals on tracks three and four. 'Oh, the perversity of it all!' Paul joked during their fifth day of playing 'Ob-La-Di, Ob-La-Da'.

However, it was soon decided that take 13 from an earlier session was better. A four-track reduction mix of that was made to create take 22; then a further bounce-down became take 23 – the master. This consisted of overloaded acoustic guitar-bass, piano, saxes superimposed during a session on 11 July, an electric bass, percussion, lead and backing vocals and various fun interjections: 'Desmond lets the children lend a hand' was followed by shouts of 'arm' and 'leg'!

When the song was finally mixed, the tape was speeded up by a semitone to B flat. During its evolution during a week of sessions, 'Ob-La-Di, Ob-La-Da' had moved and grooved far away from the ringing acoustic guitars that drove earlier versions documented on *Anthology 3* and **CD Four – Sessions Track 8** – take 3 – in this box set.

Wild Honey Pie

20.08.1968

At the end of the second session to complete 'Mother Nature's Son', Paul decided to create another solo recording on the fly. 'This is Ad Lib Take One,' engineer Ken Scott announced. 'We were in experimental mode,' Paul recalled. 'I said, "Can I just make something up?" It was very home-made; it wasn't a very big production at all. I built it up sculpturally with a lot of vibrato on the strings; really pulling the strings madly. Hence, "Wild Honey Pie", which was a reference to the song I had written called "Honey Pie".'

Recording details:
Recorded: 20 August 1968 – Studio Two, Abbey Road
Mono Mix: 20 August 1968 – *Stereo Mix:* 13 October 1968

Paul: lead vocal, backing vocals, acoustic guitars, drums :

Following the addition of an overdub by four brass musicians, then drums and a second guitar part played by Paul, 'Mother Nature's Son' was ready for mixing on the night of 20 August. But Paul was not ready to go home. After recording a demo of the still-unheard 'Etcetera', he constructed the multi-layered 'Wild Honey Pie'. 'I started off with the guitar and did a multi-tracking experiment in the control room or maybe in the little room next door,' he remembers. On tracks one and two Paul is heard singing, playing guitar and keeping rhythm by hitting a bass drum with a foot pedal; a syncopated rhythm on a tom-drum with more singing is on track three; another vocal performance is on track four.

The fluttering sound of one of the acoustic guitars was created by making the speed of the tape fluctuate slightly. This was done by brushing a hand over the metal spool while it rotated at 15 inches per second. It resulted in a sound similar to playing a cassette tape when the machine's batteries are almost flat. As Giles Martin and Sam Okell discovered while remixing *The Beatles*, this was an effect that could only be emulated by the same laborious – and rather hazardous – technique used in 1968.

The Continuing Story Of Bungalow Bill

08.10.1968

Besides The Beatles' party, there were people of all ages and backgrounds staying in the bungalows at the ashram in Rishikesh. One of



Mr G. MARTIN — 8 TRACK — 1069

Tape No. E69887 (8 TRACK) **Identity** THE BEATLES

Subject		START	FINISH		Remarks
WHILE MY GUITAR GENTLY WEEPS	16	COMPLETE.		4.53	~~BEST~~
REMAKE →	17	B/D			
	18	F/S			
	19	F/S			
	20	COMPLETE.		4.14	
	21	— " —		5.05	H/
	22	B/D			
	23	B/D			
	24	B/D			
	25	COMPLETE.		5.00	BEST
	26	B/D.			FOR TAKES 17-26.

Remarks (take 16):
TK1) DRUMS + BASS
TK2) ORGAN + GUITAR
TK3) VOCAL (1)
TK4) VOCAL (2)
TK5) GUITARS (BACKWARD)
TK6) MARACAS - DRUMS + GUITAR
TK7)
TK8)

Remarks (for takes 17-26):
TK1 DRUMS
TK2 GUITAR
TK3 PIANO + ORGAN
TK4 ACOUSTIC + VOCAL
TK5 VOCALS
TK6 BASS
TK7 GUITAR + PERCUSSION
TK8 ORGAN.

TAPE ~~LENGTH~~ TYPE 8"

STUDIO - 2 - 2
MACHINE No. - 3M (2)

ENGINEER K. SCOTT — J. SMITH.
DATE 03 SEPTEMBER 1968.

TAPE SPEED 15 I.P.S.

2234

these was Nancy Cooke de Herrera, who had worked in the 1960s as a publicist for Maharishi Mahesh Yogi. She was visited during her stay in India by her 27-year-old son Richard Cooke III, who admits that his demeanour did pose a contrast to the famous attendees. 'They epitomised the counterculture and I was the classic good American boy and college athlete. There wasn't a whole bunch that we got to connect on.' Just as John relates in the song, Richard and his mother did ride off on elephants for a trip to hunt tigers. In her book *Beyond Gurus: A Woman of Many Worlds*, Nancy explained that local villagers had been concerned about tigers killing elephants. It was Richard 'Rikki' Cooke's last ever hunting trip. Afterwards, he worked for 40 years as a freelance photographer for *National Geographic* magazine.

In John's eyes, the Cookes' expedition seemed to be straight out of the comic books and Saturday morning film serials he had enjoyed during his childhood in the late 1940s and early 1950s: 'There used to be a character called Jungle Jim and I combined him with Buffalo Bill,' he explained. The only fictional element in the tale was the sudden appearance of another character from the same period, who 'zapped him right between the eyes'. The adventures of 'Captain Marvel – The World's Mightiest Mortal' were recounted in comics and 'continuing story' films, alongside those of many other heroes such as Buck Rogers, Flash Gordon and The Phantom.

The good-natured feeling generated by the singalong chorus is juxtaposed with the anger of the question 'What did you kill, Bungalow Bill?' During some of the takes at Abbey Road, John added the line 'Was it a thrill, Bungalow Bill?' Paul rates the song as 'one of my favourites to this day, because it stands for a lot of what I stand for now. Its message is "Did you really have to shoot that tiger? Aren't you a big guy? Aren't you a brave man?" I think John put it very well.'

Recording details:
Recorded: 8 October 1968 – Studio Two, Abbey Road
Mono Mix: 9 October 1968 – *Stereo Mix:* 9 October 1968

John: lead vocal, acoustic guitar, organ, whistling :
Paul: backing vocal, bass, whistling :
George: backing vocal, acoustic guitar, whistling :
Ringo: backing vocal, drums, tambourine :

Yoko Ono, Maureen Starkey and others: additional vocals :

Additional Instrument:
Chris Thomas: Mellotron – *Recorded:* 8 October 1968

When The Beatles recorded this song in Studio Two, over four months had passed since they had performed it at George's house in Esher. The boisterous spirit of their demo had to be recaptured at the end of a long session, which had started some twelve hours earlier during the afternoon of 8 October. So far, George and Paul had added some parts to 'Long, Long, Long' and then, from scratch, the group had efficiently wrapped up 'I'm So Tired'. Around dawn, with John celebrating his 28th birthday, they energetically rushed through a rumbustious recording of 'The Continuing Story Of Bungalow Bill'.

CD Six – Sessions Track 16 is take two of three attempts made to record the basic track. Yoko sings with John on the chorus and makes a solo contribution in the role of Bungalow Bill's mother with the line 'Not when he looked so fierce'. The master is take three. Paul added two bass parts on tracks five and six. John sang a second vocal on track five, including his invitation, 'All the children sing'. Chris Thomas made his fourth and final performance for the album on a keyboard by overdubbing Mellotron on track seven, which also contains Ringo playing tambourine. Chris used the mandolin setting of the Mellotron during the verses and trombone setting for the choruses. 'I've been very fortunate in having ridiculous fantasies come true,' he commented. 'For instance, playing with The Beatles on "Bungalow Bill" with George Martin up there producing. Incredible!' The Mellotron has a function to play seven seconds from tape of a musical passage. This was the source for the Spanish guitar flourish that is heard at the beginning.

The remaining overdubs on tracks three and eight consist of what are described on the tape box as 'mass voices' and guitars. Handclaps and whistling are also heard on track eight, which concludes with John's northern English greeting: ''Ay, up!'

While My Guitar Gently Weeps

25.07.1968

While some have assumed that, because of its subject matter, this must be another song written in the tranquillity of Rishikesh, George remembered that he had written it 'at my mother's home in Warrington in the north of England – spiritual home of George Formby! I was thinking about this thing to do with the Chinese *I Ching*, "The Book of Changes". They have this concept that whatever happens is all meant to be and that there's no such thing as coincidence. In the West we think of coincidence as being something that just happens. But in the Eastern concept, they just think that every little item that's going down is all purposeful. "While My Guitar Gently Weeps" was just a simple study based on the theory that everything has some purpose for being there at that given moment. I was thinking that anything I see when I open a book, I'm going to write a song about. So I opened this book and I saw "gently weeps". I shut the book and then I started the tune.'

The song is a lament for the unrealised potential within mankind to imbue life with spirituality – 'the love that lies sleeping'. George's demo recorded at home in May 1968 is missing some of the lines heard in the final version. 'The problems you sow are the troubles you're reaping' and 'I look at the trouble and hate that is raging' from his early draft were eventually replaced. The first version recorded at Abbey Road has a verse that also did not make it into the final master. It begins with 'I look from the wings at the play you are staging…' This was a metaphor that George reiterated in a BBC interview in October 1969 when he mused: 'All I'm doing is acting out the part of Beatle George and we're all acting out our parts. You know, the world is a stage and the people are the players. Shakespeare said that… and he's right.' ('All the world's a stage, And all the men and women merely players' opens the 'Seven Ages of Man' speech in *As You Like It*.)

The first studio recording of 'While My Guitar Gently Weeps', with just an acoustic guitar and harmonium accompaniment, was eventually released in 1996 as part of the collection of outtakes on *Anthology 3*. Ten years later, this acoustic take was chosen for the innovative soundtrack to The Beatles' Cirque du Soleil show, *LOVE*. George's widow Olivia was initially hesitant about permitting its inclusion. She felt that the track needed some enhancement to be effective in a theatrical context. As a possible solution, Giles Martin suggested his father write a string arrangement for the song. George Martin revealed that composing the score 'was a demanding task. I was really a bit worried about it and I was even more worried when Olivia came to the session to listen to what it was going to be like.

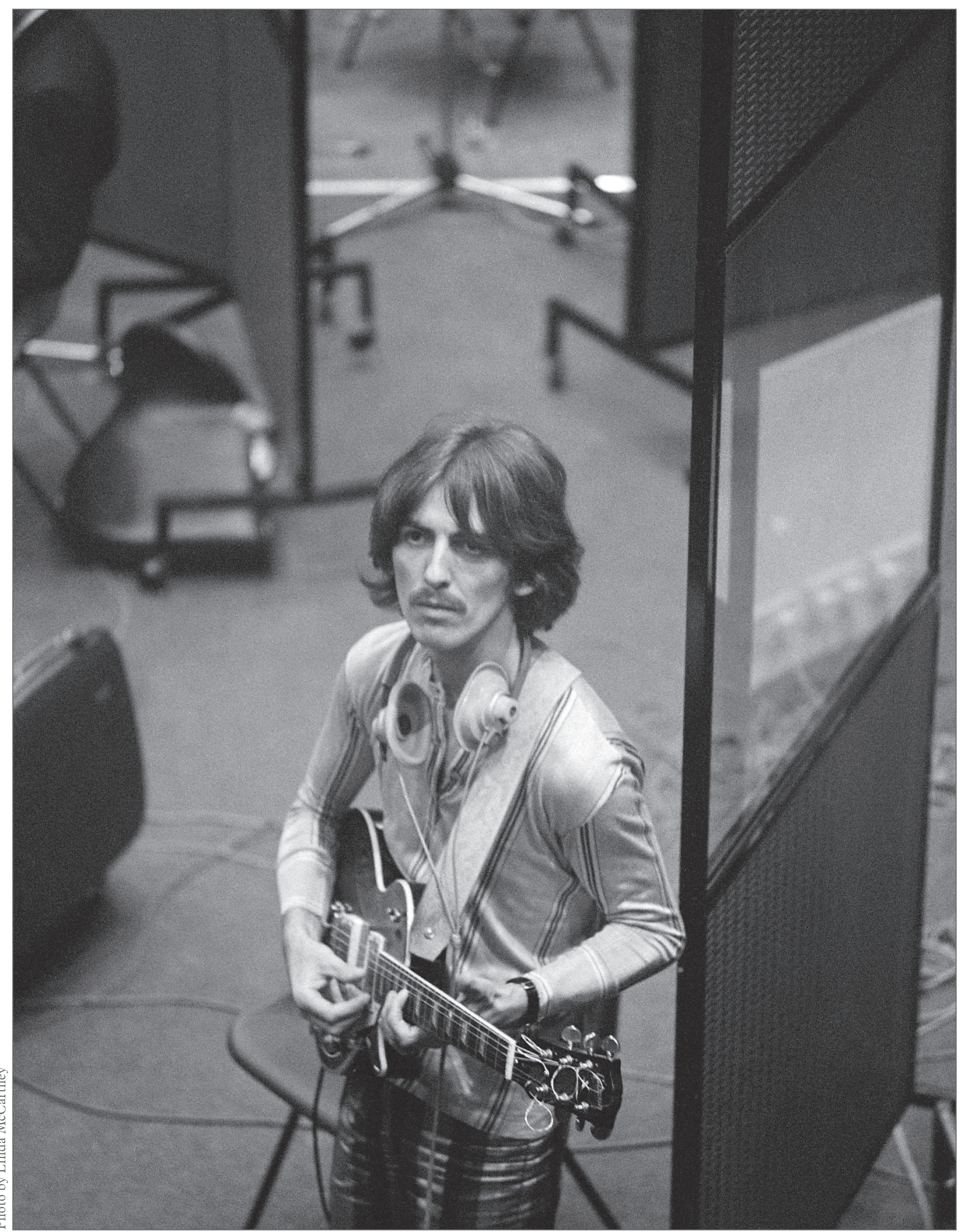


Photo by Linda McCartney

But I was enormously relieved when she was beaming from ear to ear and said, "It's wonderful."' 'It was such a privilege to see him in action,' Olivia recalled. 'He was really sympathetic to the music. He really understood what George was trying to say in that song.'

George Martin's sensitive string arrangement was his final piece of work for the group – 36 years after they had split up. The version of 'While My Guitar Gently Weeps' created for *LOVE* now serves as a moving reminder of the great talents of both George Harrison and George Martin.

Recorded during the session for 'While My Guitar Gently Weeps' on 5 September 1968:

Let It Be
On a tape box for the final session to record 'While My Guitar Gently Weeps', there is a note of a performance of another song. Not knowing what it was, the second engineer, John Smith, wrote 'Ad Lib'. It was, in fact, an early try-out of 'Let It Be'. In this embryonic version, Paul sings 'Brother Malcolm comes to me' – not 'Mother Mary', as, of course, the world is familiar with from the official recording of the song in January 1969.

Recording details:
Version One:
Recorded: 25 July 1968 – Studio Two, Abbey Road

George: vocal and acoustic guitar :
Paul: harmonium :

Version Two:
Recorded: 16 August, 3 and 5 September 1968 – Studio Two, Abbey Road

John: organ :
Paul: bass :
George: acoustic guitar :
Ringo: drums :

Version Three:
Recorded: 5 and 6 September 1968 – Studio Two, Abbey Road
Mono Mix: 14 October 1968 – *Stereo Mix:* 14 October 1968

George: lead vocal, acoustic guitar :
Paul: vocal, piano, bass, organ :
John: bass :
Ringo: drums, maracas :

Additional Instrument:
Eric Clapton: lead guitar – *Recorded:* 5 September 1968

The first session to record 'While My Guitar Gently Weeps' was attended by George and Paul. The instrumentation for this preliminary version was as sparse as the Esher demo; the tempo, a little slower. The original tape box and studio documentation mention only one take being recorded on 25 July. What a thrilling surprise to find during the meticulous research for this project that there was a second unannounced take on the tape (CD Five – Sessions Track 2). It is intended to be just a run-through for Paul to familiarise himself with playing the chords on organ, but it is a gem of a discovery. Further work on the song was not resumed until three weeks later. In the meantime, The Beatles worked long and hard for three nights on another of George's songs – 'Not Guilty'.

The arrangement for 'While My Guitar Gently Weeps' on 16 August was heavier. Fourteen takes were recorded of an instrumental performance with Paul's bass recorded on track one, guitar from George on two, organ played by John on three and Ringo's drums on four. 'l like the way it suddenly changes into a song,' George said to the other three. They decided the best take of the night was the last. During a reduction mix to a second four-track tape, drums and bass were combined on track one, while organ and guitar were mixed together on track two. While it was bounced down, the guitar was 'flanged' and the tape ran slower than normal, which reduced the tempo and lowered the key by three semitones. The next day, George flew to Corfu for a short break.

The next sessions devoted to the song were significant in two ways. First, after taking time out from The Beatles, Ringo had, thankfully, returned to the studio. He recalled in *The Beatles Anthology* TV series: 'I had definitely left. I couldn't take it any more. I got a telegram saying, "You're the best rock 'n' roll drummer in the world. Come on home, we love you." When I got back to the studio I found George had had it decked out with flowers. We'd got through that little crisis and then "The White Album" really took off.' Second, The Beatles were for the first time able to use an eight-track tape machine at Abbey Road. In fact, there had been two 3M eight-tracks in the building since May 1968. They were employed straight away for operatic recordings with four tracks allocated to an orchestra, two for a choir and two for soloists. As Abbey Road's ingenious engineer Ken Townshend recalls, 'The eight-track machines were not suitable at that stage for pop recordings. The Beatles had become reliant on the use of Automatic Double Tracking and phasing so before the 3M machines were pressed into service, extensive modifications – particularly to the head block – were designed and implemented by Francis Thompson at the studios.'

Take 15 – with drums, bass, organ and guitar – was transferred to an eight-track tape. Onto what was now take 16, George double-tracked a lead vocal and devised a backwards guitar solo. But despite the amount of work already dedicated to this second version, it was abandoned. When the group started afresh, it was officially take 17, but George announced the new recording as 'Take One'. Addressing Paul, he added, 'You, me and Ringo just for the intro chords … everybody or whoever's left – and Eric – comes in on the other bit.' Eric Clapton was a member of the successful blues-based trio Cream, who had recently announced their decision to split up and were gearing up for a farewell tour in the autumn of 1968. It is clear from the fascinating audio on the tapes that Eric Clapton played with The Beatles on the majority of takes 17 to 45. Leaving space for later overdubbing, four tracks were initially used: drums on one; Eric's lead guitar on two; Paul alternating between piano and organ on three; George singing and playing acoustic guitar along with harmonies from Paul on four.

The master take was take 25, but they had played on well past that performance. CD Five – Sessions Track 13 is take 27. When that recording winds down, George is heard explaining that he had tried the kind of falsetto melisma that Smokey Robinson, one of his favourite singers, seemed to accomplish so effortlessly. Amidst the final takes, a snippet of a future classic was performed in embryonic form – 'Let It Be' (CD Five – Sessions Track 12). 'While My Guitar Gently Weeps' had progressed some distance from its simple acoustic origin and, at the last stage, received overdubs of double-tracked vocals, organ, tambourine and a bass part played by John.

During mixing to mono and stereo, the sounds of the organ and Eric Clapton's guitar were treated with effects. 'Eric is a good friend of mine and I really dig him as a guitarist and as a guy,' George recalled. 'We used to hang out such a lot at that period and Eric gave me a fantastic Les Paul Guitar, which is the one he plays on that date. So, Eric played that and I thought it was really good. Then we listened to it back and he said, "Ah, there's a problem, though; it's not Beatley enough." So we put it through the ADT to wobble it up a bit.'

MONO/STEREO

RECORDING SHEET

Sheet : 1 of : 1 Class : POP Overall Title 8TR → MONO REMIX. Date of Session 26th Sept 68 Job No : 1069.

ARTISTIC INFORMATION				COSTING INFORMATION			
ARTISTE(S) AND/OR CAST	THE BEATLES.	CONDUCTOR		MATERIALS USED	2x811RS/1x811(1")	ORDER NUMBER	
		ORCHESTRA		SESSION BOOKED TIME	7.00-12.0	COMPANY	
		ACCOMPANIMENT		SESSION ACTUAL	7.0 – 1.30	STUDIO/CONTROL ROOM	2 – 2
		ART. DEPT. REP.	MR. C. THOMAS	SET-UP/PLAYBACK	1½	ENGINEERS	KRS-MWS

TITLES and MATRIX Nos.	AUTHOR/COMPOSER/ PUBLISHER	REEL NUMBERS	FALSE STARTS	TAKE No.	TAKE DETAILS FROM	TAKE DETAILS TO	DUR.	M	REMARKS
HAPPINESS IS A WARM GUN ~~IN YOUR HAND~~.		E70429		RM3	– COMPLETE				
			RM4&5	RM6	~ "	~			
				RM7	~ "	~			
				RM8	— "	—			
			RM9	RM10	— "	—			
				RM11	~ "	~			
				RM12	~ "	~	2.41		BEST.
WHATS THE NEW MARY JANE		E70430		RM1	– B/D	—	✓	—	
				RM2	– COMPLETE –		2.12		BEST
GLASSONION.				RM1	— "	—	1.50		
				RM2	— "	—	1.50		BEST
I WILL.				RM1	— "	—	1.46		
				RM2	— "	—	1.46		BEST.
SOUND EFFECTS FOR GLASS ONION.		E70428-4T			COMPLETE –				BEST.

Ref. 9864

MONO/STEREO

RECORDING SHEET

Sheet : 1 of : 1 Class : Pop Overall Title Mono + Stereo Reductions Date of Session 15 October 1968 Job No : 1069

ARTISTIC INFORMATION				COSTING INFORMATION			
ARTISTE(S) AND/OR CAST	The Beatles	CONDUCTOR		MATERIALS USED	2x811 (¼")	ORDER NUMBER	
		ORCHESTRA		SESSION BOOKED TIME	6-12	COMPANY	
		ACCOMPANIMENT		SESSION ACTUAL	6-8	STUDIO/CONTROL ROOM	2-2
		ART. DEPT. REP.	Mr G. Martin.	SET-UP/PLAYBACK	½	ENGINEERS	KS-JS.

TITLES and MATRIX Nos.	AUTHOR/COMPOSER/ PUBLISHER	REEL NUMBERS	FALSE STARTS	TAKE No.	TAKE DETAILS FROM	TAKE DETAILS TO	DUR.	M	REMARKS
Happiness Is A Warm Gun		E70666Z (¼")		RS1	Complete		2.40		
				RS2	— "	—	2.40		
				RS3	— "	—	2.40		
				RS4	— "	—	2.40		Best
Im So Tired			RS1-2	RS3	— "	—	2.00		
			RS4	RS5	— "	—	2.03		Best
Im So Tired		E70667 (¼")	RM1	RM2	— "	—	2.03		
				RM3	— "	—	2.03		Best
Cry Baby Cry		E70666Z (cont)		RS1	— "	—	2.33		
			RS2	RS3	— "	—	2.34		Best
Cry Baby Cry		E70667 (cont)		RM1	— "	—	2.34		Best

Ref. 9864

✗

Happiness Is A Warm Gun

23.09.1968

'Through those years that kid of mine made kills that would turn a veteran shotgunner blue – not with cold but with envy.' So wrote Warren W. Herlihy, when proudly relating how his 18-year-old son John had been shooting guns since the age of seven. His article in the May 1968 edition of *American Rifleman* was called 'Happiness Is a Warm Gun'. Struck by the bizarre headline, George Martin showed John the magazine. 'I thought it was a fantastic, insane thing to say,' John remembered during Jann Wenner's 1970 interview with him. 'A warm gun means you just shot something.' He used the phrase for the final section of a song made up of four fragments.

When the Esher demo called 'I Need A Fix' was recorded, it comprised three sections. It began with 'I need a fix 'cause I'm going down', moved to 'Mother Superior, jump the gun', and then concluded with a refrain that was eventually deleted – 'Yoko Ono, Oh No; Yoko Ono, Oh Yes'. When The Beatles began recording the completed song in Abbey Road four months later, the title written on the tape box was 'Happiness Is A Warm Gun In Your Hand'. By this stage, the medley began with 'She's not a girl who misses much…' 'It sounds like faint praise but, on Merseyside in those days, it was actually the best you could get!' Derek Taylor recalled. The final section featuring the title of the magazine article was performed in the style of a 1950s doo-wop ballad with appropriate backing vocals chanted by Paul and George – 'Bang, bang, shoot, shoot'.

This collage of diverse ideas works as a whole, but what does it mean? There are some clues on a printed lyric sheet annotated by John. The first section up to 'donated to the National Trust' was labelled by him 'Dirty Old Man'. Next to the words of the middle section that survived from the Esher demo version, he wrote 'The Junkie'. The final verse was described as 'The Gunman (satire of 50's R+R)'.

In his interview for Radio Luxembourg in November 1968, Paul described John's song as 'a favourite of mine. I think they're great words. It's just good poetry.' As he revealed in a later interview, Paul was also in tune with the song's message: 'It's very similar to "Bungalow Bill" in that it's a piss-take of all the people who really do think happiness is a warm gun. There's a good vocal on it and it's a very interesting song, because it changes tempo a lot, it's quite a complex piece. It's very Lennon.' Even John himself, often harshly critical of his own work, was pleased: 'Oh, I love it. I think it's a beautiful song. I really like all the things that are happening in it. It seemed to run through all the different kinds of rock music.'

Recording details:
Recorded: 23–25 September 1968 – Studio Two, Abbey Road
Mono Mix: 26 September 1968 – *Stereo Mix:* 15 October 1968

John: lead vocal, backing vocal, electric guitar, organ :
Paul: backing vocal, bass, piano :
George: backing vocal, lead electric guitar :
Ringo: drums, tambourine :

Following a weekend away from the studio, The Beatles reconvened on Monday 23 September for three nights of work to complete 'Happiness Is A Warm Gun'. Ringo's recollection of the final phase of the recording process for the double LP is that it was a very cooperative time: 'On "The White Album" we ended up being a band again and that's what I always love. I love being in a band.' Certainly, the group worked very hard on this song to master the challenging changes in time signature throughout the medley of the four sections. Counting false starts and breakdowns, The Beatles performed 45 takes during the first session with Paul on bass (track one); Ringo drumming (two); John playing guitar (three); lead guitar by George (four); and a guide vocal from John (five).

John sought guidance from the control room situated up a flight of steps from the studio floor. 'How's it sounding up there?' he often asked. He was particularly concerned about his finger-picking guitar part in the first section. 'Was it right picking-wise, Chris, up to "I need a fix?"' he enquired after take three. Chris Thomas was in the producer's chair for another week. 'Mark that "picking good",' John laughs after take seven. At the beginning of the second reel, take 11, to help keep in time, The Beatles had introduced a tacit bar before they switched to the 'Mother Superior Jump The Gun' section. The 19th take (**CD Six – Sessions Track 9**) is a strong performance, but still the band played on… for many more. Although George had observed, 'It's getting better in general' after take 40, at the end of the final recording of the night, John was not so sure. With an exaggerated Scouse accent, he wondered, 'Is it getting worse and worse?'

They continued the next night with takes 46 to 70 recorded on two reels. John was worried about his picking finger: 'Now I'm playing on a blister. When it bursts, I won't be able to play any more,' he warned after take 65. 'Please God, may my blister last so I may pick abundance with,' he prays after take 67. In the end, it was decided to opt for the pragmatic solution of editing two four-track tapes together to create a performance that pleased everyone. Take 53 was used up to 1'34", then the final section from take 65 continued to the end.

Wiping John's guide vocal, four tracks were used for a variety of overdubs. John's lead vocal with ADT and Paul's harmonies were recorded on track six; Paul added a second bass part on track eight. Containing different elements for the four sections, track seven has: an organ part for the opening (more prominent in the original mono mix), followed by George's fuzz guitar riffs in the 'I Need A Fix' section, a tambourine and hi-hat added in the 'Mother Superior' segment, then a piano played during the final verse. The witty backing vocals consist of Paul and George taking the high parts with John singing a doo-wop bass part: 'Dah-duh-duh'. John's 'satire of 50's R+R' also allowed him to have fun sending up spoken parts heard in rock records from the fifties, such as the syrupy monologue by bass man Bill Reed for The Diamonds' 1957 hit 'Little Darlin''. John had delivered a similar brief spoof during his Esher demo of 'I'm So Tired' that began 'When I hold you in your arms, when you show each one of your charms…'

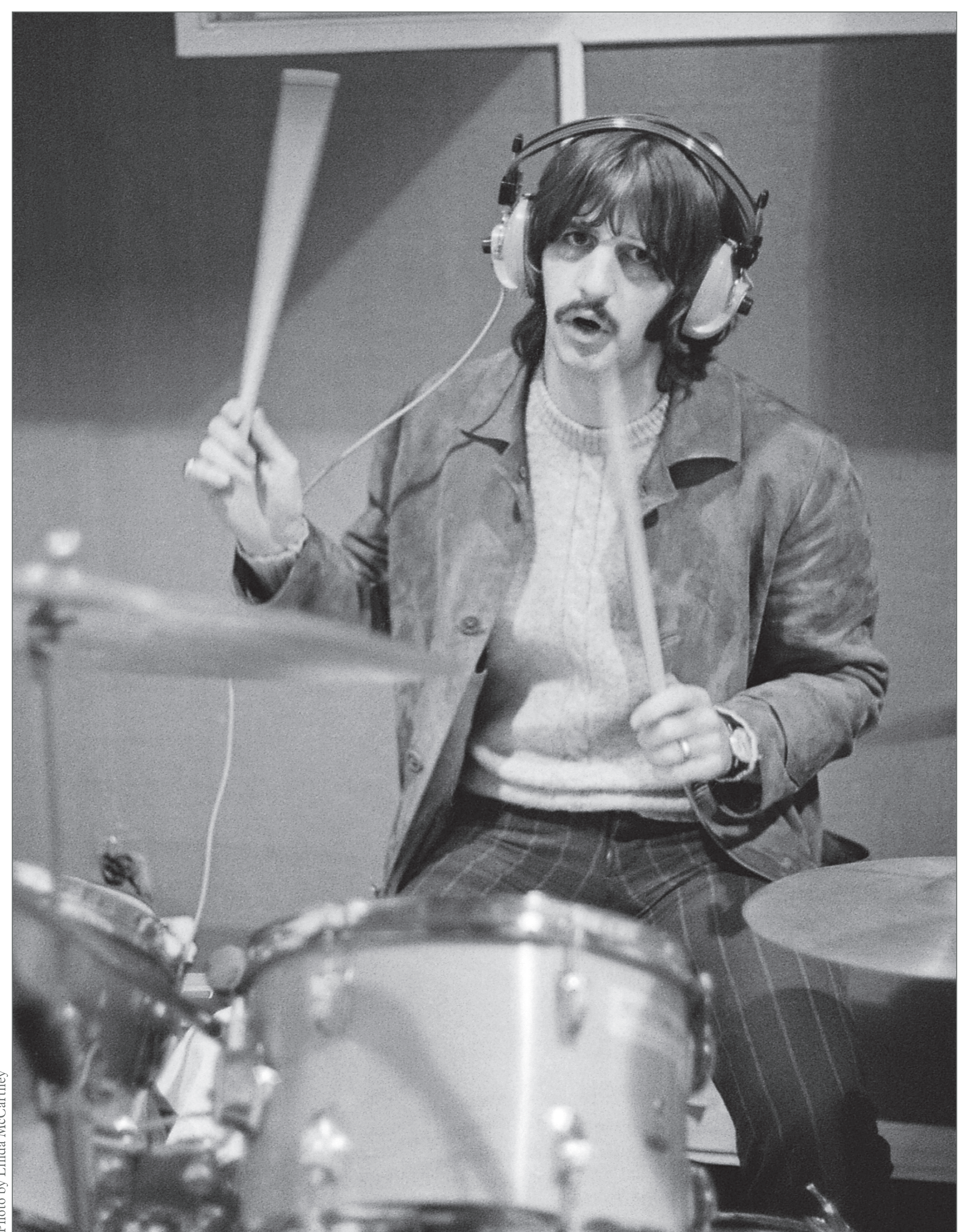


Photo by Linda McCartney

Martha My Dear

04.10.1968

There are fewer piano-led songs on 'The White Album' compared to the previous year's LP, *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*. 'Martha My Dear' is an exception. 'I was completely self-taught on the piano,' Paul recalled in 2003. 'Generally, I played just a kind of chords and bass line accompaniment, which was all we needed, because we were always going to be singing over the top of it. You didn't want to get too much in the way, so you could then put all the flurries and the melody and the words on top. The cleverest I ever got was with "Martha My Dear", which was actually a contrapuntal little thing that I taught myself. I forced myself to learn to do two parts at once.'

Having found a tune, Paul experimented with finding words. 'Mainly, I don't write a song thinking, "Now I'll write a song about…" I'm just doing a tune and then some words come into my head and these happened to be "Martha my dear, though I spend my days in conversation". It doesn't mean anything, but those words just happened to come into my head.' Martha was the name of the Old English sheepdog Paul had bought soon after moving into his North London home in summer 1966. That August, the seven-week-old puppy made a cameo appearance on the radio when she howled in the background during a BBC interview with Keith Fordyce for *The Lennon and McCartney Songbook*. 'Martha was my first ever pet. I never had a dog or a cat at home. I remember John being amazed to see me being so loving to an animal. He said, "I've never seen you like that before." She was a very cuddly dog.' While many have looked for other layers of meaning in 'Martha My Dear', Paul explained, in the month *The Beatles* was released, that 'you can read anything you like into it, but really it's just a song. It's me singing to my dog.'

Recording details:
Recorded: 4 October 1968 – Trident Studios
Mono Mix: 5 October 1968 – *Stereo Mix:* 5 October 1968

Paul: lead vocal, piano, bass, handclaps :
George: electric guitar :
Ringo: drums :

Additional Instruments:
Four violins, two violas, two cellos, three trumpets, French horn, trombone, tuba, flugelhorn – *Recorded:* 4 October 1968 – Trident Studios

Within a list of songs in one of Paul's notebooks from spring 1968, are the titles 'Martha My Dear' and 'Silly Girl'. Neither was demoed at Esher, but by the autumn Paul had figured out a way of combining both into one song. Unusually, the basic track for 'Martha My Dear' was recorded on the same day that outside players were booked to add an arrangement. George Martin had returned from his holiday just a few days before and, presumably after listening to a demo tape recorded by Paul, had written a score for strings and brass.

CD Six – Sessions Track 12 is a mix of Paul's vocal and some handclaps on track five, along with Ringo's drums and rhythm guitar played by George on six, and Paul's piano on seven. In *The Beatles Book Monthly*, Mal Evans wrote that 'Ringo bashed a hole in his brand new bass drum skin the night we started this track.' The trumpets and horn were recorded on track three, trombones and tuba on track four and the strings on eight. A photograph from the session indicates that the brass parts were probably recorded separately from the strings. Paul double-tracked another vocal with handclaps on track two.

The mono and stereo mixes were made the following day, the last Trident session for the album. They were copied at Abbey Road on 7 October to convert the Trident recording made with the American NAB equalisation to the UK standard of CCIR.

I'm So Tired

08.10.1968

'I wrote it in India,' John stated in 1980. 'I couldn't sleep. I'd been meditating all day and then I couldn't sleep at night. I was so tired. That's it.' The song was demoed at George's house in May 1968, but not recorded at Abbey Road until nearly five months later. The words were not altered at all during the interim. Expressing his distaste for his smoking habit, John came up with what Paul describes as 'a classic line. It's so John – "And curse Sir Walter Raleigh, he was such a stupid get."'

As every British pupil was taught at school, Sir Walter Raleigh popularised smoking at the 16th-century court of Elizabeth I. If, while daydreaming in class, you missed the fact that Raleigh had brought Virginian tobacco from the far-off land of America, then Bob Newhart's 'Introducing Tobacco To Civilisation' was a popular reminder. With memorable lines such as 'Walt, I think you're gonna have rather a tough time selling people on sticking burning leaves in their mouths', the comedy routine was often on the radio. Micky Dolenz of The Monkees has related how he originally called his song about a visit to the UK 'Randy Scouse Git'. He had seen an episode of the TV series *Till Death Us Do Part* in which Alf Garnett berated his Liverpudlian son-in-law with that insult. In Liverpool, however ,'git' was pronounced 'get', which was handy for John, because it rhymed with cigarette.

Commenting on his work in September 1980, John judged 'I'm So Tired' to be one of his favourite tracks. 'I just like the sound of it and I sing it well.'

Recording details:
Recorded: 8 October 1968 – Studio Two, Abbey Road
Mono Mix: 15 October 1968 – *Stereo Mix:* 15 October 1968

John: lead vocal, electric guitar, organ, harmony vocals *(not used on master)* :
Paul: backing vocal, bass, electric piano. harmony vocals *(not used on master)* :
George: lead electric guitar, harmony vocals *(not used on master)* :
Ringo: drums :

With the deadline to deliver the mastered album a little over a week away, The Beatles embarked on a long stint in the studio from 4.00pm on 8 October until 8.00am the next morning – John's 28th birthday. They started the session with some finishing touches for 'Long, Long, Long' and ended by making light work of 'The Continuing Story Of Bungalow Bill'. In between, they recorded from start to finish 'I'm So Tired'. It was a live group performance with John's vocal on each take of the night intended to be the one heard on the record. Bass was on track one; drums on two; rhythm guitar played by John and George's lead guitar were mixed on track three; and John's lead vocal was on four. CD Six – Sessions Track 14 is take seven. Thankfully, despite John's comment at the end of it, at this point in The Beatles' recording career no proper takes were ever scrapped.

Enjoying anew the camaraderie of performing together as a tight unit, Ringo anchored the beat and made his drum fills equally impressive for each take. In fact, everyone was on form. At one point, reviewing what they had taped so far, John admitted: 'Oh, it's so complicated.

MONO/~~STEREO~~ 4T.

RECORDING SHEET

Sheet: ...... of: ...... Class: POP. Overall Title ...... Date of Session 11/6/68. Job No: 1069

ARTISTIC INFORMATION			
ARTISTE(S) AND/OR CAST	THE BEATLES.	CONDUCTOR	
		ORCHESTRA	
		ACCOMPANIMENT	
		ART. DEPT. REP.	MR. G. MARTIN

COSTING INFORMATION			
MATERIALS USED	2×811 ½"/1×811 ¼"	ORDER NUMBER	
SESSION BOOKED TIME	2:30 - 12 00	COMPANY	PARLO.
SESSION ACTUAL	2:30 12:15.	STUDIO/CONTROL ROOM	NO 2
SET-UP/PLAYBACK	½	ENGINEERS	GE PMc

TITLES and MATRIX Nos.	AUTHOR/COMPOSER/ PUBLISHER	REEL NUMBERS	FALSE STARTS	TAKE No.	TAKE DETAILS FROM	TO	DUR.	M	REMARKS
BLACK BIRD.		E 68895 (4T).		1	COMPLETE.				
			2 3	4	— " —				
			5	6	— " —				
			7 8 9	10	— " —				
			14 15.	16	— " —				
			17	18	— " —				
				19	— " —				
— " —		E. 68896	1 2 3	4	— " —				ALL TAKES UN 'ANN.
			5	6	— " —				
			7 8 o	9	— " —				
			10 11 12						
				13	COMPLETE		BEST.		2:23.
4T REMIX MONO									
BLACKBIRD.		E. 68897.	RM	1/2 F/S.					4T – 13.
			RM	3	COMPLETE.				
			RM	4	— " —				
			RM	5	— " —				
			RM	6.	— " —		BEST.		2:20.

Ref. 9864

MONO/STEREO

RECORDING SHEET

Sheet: 1 of: 1 Class: POP. Overall Title SUPERIMPOSITION + MONO + STEREO REDUCTIONS Date of Session 11 OCTOBER 1968 Job No: 1069

ARTISTIC INFORMATION			
ARTISTE(S) AND/OR CAST	THE BEATLES.	CONDUCTOR	
		ORCHESTRA	
		ACCOMPANIMENT	
		ART. DEPT. REP.	M^R G. MARTIN.

COSTING INFORMATION			
MATERIALS USED	1×811 (¼")	ORDER NUMBER	
SESSION BOOKED TIME	3 ~~6~~ - 12	COMPANY	
SESSION ACTUAL	3 - 6 00	STUDIO/CONTROL ROOM	2 - 2
SET-UP/PLAYBACK	½	ENGINEERS	KS - JS

TITLES and MATRIX Nos.	AUTHOR/COMPOSER/ PUBLISHER	REEL NUMBERS	FALSE STARTS	TAKE No.	TAKE DETAILS FROM	TO	DUR.	M	REMARKS
SAVOY TRUFFLE.				1	COMPLETE.				BEST (TAPES FROM TRIDENT STUDIOS)
PIGGIES.		E 70559 (CONT)		RM1	— " —		3.02		
				RM2	— " —		3.02		
				RM3	— " —		3.02		
				RM4	— " —		3.04		BEST
PIGGIES		E 70565 Z (CONT)		RS1	— " —		3.02		
				RS2	— " —		3.04		
				RS3	— " —		3.04		BEST
DON'T PASS ME BY		E 70617 (¼")		RS1	— " —		4.00		BEST
				RM1	— " —		4.00		BEST
GOODNIGHT.		E 70617 (CONT)		RS1	— " —		3.10		BEST
			RM1	RM2	— " —		3.10		BEST.

Ref. 9864

How was anybody else, you see? Cos I was better singing on the previous one. OK, do it again. It's just that there's all them to choose from then.' The 14th take was to everyone's satisfaction and so over-dubbing commenced to fill tracks five to seven. CD Six – Sessions Track 15 is the master with some elements that were left out of the final mixes made a week later. For example, John, Paul and George sang harmonies on track five, which also included John and Paul singing the chorus ('You'd say I'm putting you on…'). Another omitted part, described as 'far-off' electric guitar on the tape box, is heard in this mix. This was recorded on track seven, which also has organ and extra drums. Electric piano, guitar and more drums are present on track six.

John's mysterious mumblings at the end of the song have kept conspiracy theorists and internet forums busy for many years. As can be heard now, he also dreamt up some similar sleepy gibberish in the break before the last verse. At the final stage of preparation for the completion of the album, it was decided to streamline the track by fading out some of the embellishments. John's original intention was to keep the arrangement relatively simple. 'Try and leave those spaces, Paul,' he advised.

Blackbird

11.06.1968

Written at Paul's farm in Scotland, the musical inspiration for the guitar accompaniment came from a piece that Paul and George used to play together – 'Bourrée in E minor' by J.S. Bach. 'Part of its structure is a particular harmonic thing between the melody and the bass line which intrigued me,' Paul recalled. 'I developed a melody on guitar based on the Bach piece and took it somewhere else, took it to another level. Then I just fitted the words to it.'

Paul has explained how 'Blackbird' was written in response to current events: 'Those were the days of the civil rights movement, which we all cared passionately about, so this was really a song from me to a black woman experiencing these problems in the States: "Let me encourage you to keep trying, to keep your faith, there is hope." Rather than say "Black woman living in Little Rock" and be very specific, she became a bird, became symbolic, so you could apply it to your particular problem. This is one of my themes: take a sad song and make it better. Let this song help you.'

When English playwright and poet Adrian Mitchell was asked to edit a collection of Paul's poetry published in 2001, he encouraged the inclusion of song lyrics as well as poems. In the introduction, he justified that decision: 'Whenever critics say there is something inferior about poetry which is sung, my advice is to sing Blake's "Tyger" or Burns's "My Luve is like a Red, Red Rose" at them. A few songwriters, although they know you can get away with banal nothingness in pop lyrics, have a vision and try to convey it to us. A few manage to write truthfully about the world – as Paul does. He knows the value of words, how they can help us to enjoy living and loving.'

Accordingly, the anthology, called *Blackbird Singing: Poems and Lyrics 1965–1999*, included many songs from The Beatles' catalogue and Paul's solo work. 'I love the tune of "Blackbird",' Adrian Mitchell declared in 2002. 'And the words are just beautifully balanced and poised. I think it works on both levels. I believe William Blake would be perfectly happy to be thought of alongside The Beatles.'

Recording details:
Recorded: 11 June 1968 – Studio Two, Abbey Road
Mono Mix: 13 October 1968 – *Stereo Mix:* 13 October 1968

Paul: lead and backing vocal, guitar, foot taps :

Sound Effects tape: Volume Seven: *Birds Of A Feather* – Blackbird – various calls :

George and Ringo were in California when this session took place. George had made the trip to be filmed playing sitar with Ravi Shankar in the Big Sur region south of San Francisco for the documentary film *Raga*. While they were away, some footage was shot in Studio Two for inclusion in an Apple promotional film to be shown to executives at EMI and Capitol Records – the companies that would distribute releases on The Beatles' new label. The film crew captured parts of a rehearsal of 'Blackbird', before the tapes rolled in the control room.

John and George Martin were with Paul as he played his song through in Studio Two. The Esher demo version of 'Blackbird' does not include a false ending, because this idea came up during the rehearsal: 'Stop completely; rhythm as well, and then you start again,' George Martin suggested. John tried accompanying Paul on acoustic guitar and also piano, then all three discussed adding an arrangement for other instruments. 'You see, the only thing is that immediately I start to arrange it, I imagine a string quartet after the second verse,' Paul commented. George Martin's concept was to have just Paul and his guitar until 'the stop bit. There should be an arranged sound coming from a distance – a fairly complicated one like a bit of decoration that you've got on the back of a painting … it suddenly comes up and as it comes up close, you start again.' John thought 'a very nice bit of brass band' could be a possibility. Paul agreed that would be 'lovely', then played 'Mother Nature's Son', saying that 'a little' brass arrangement would fit that song.

There are two four-track tapes full of solo performances of 'Blackbird'. There was some confusion when numbering the takes, partly because of the false ending and also due to one reel being regarded as more of a recorded rehearsal. Paul played the song many times that day to try to make his singing sound as unforced and casual as possible. 'I've been trying to throw it away for the last hour,' he remarked after take 16. CD Three – Sessions Track 3 features take 28 (mislabelled on the tape box as take 9) with Paul's observation 'It's a decision which voice to use.' *Anthology 3* includes 'take four', which is actually take 23. The performance chosen for Paul to double-track vocals, although previously named as take 13 is, in fact, the 32nd recorded take of the day.

'Maybe on *Sgt. Pepper* we would have worked on it until we could find some way to put violins or trumpets in there,' Paul explained in 1968. 'But I don't think it needs it. It is just one of those – pick it and sing it, and that's it. Instead, there's a blackbird singing at the very end. Somebody said it was a thrush, but I think it's a blackbird.' EMI Sound engineer Stuart Eltham confirmed it was, indeed, a blackbird he had recorded in his back garden in Ickenham. The chirping was added to the song from an Abbey Road sound effects tape when 'Blackbird' was mixed in mono and stereo four months later.

Piggies

19.09.1968

In July 1968, following a preview of the animated Beatles film *Yellow Submarine*, George told the press: 'I have written ten songs for the new LP. We have about 40 in all and we don't know yet which ones we'll use.' Demoed at his house in May, 'Piggies' was recorded five months later at Abbey Road. The last line heard in the Esher demo version had altered by the time George sang the song at Abbey Road:

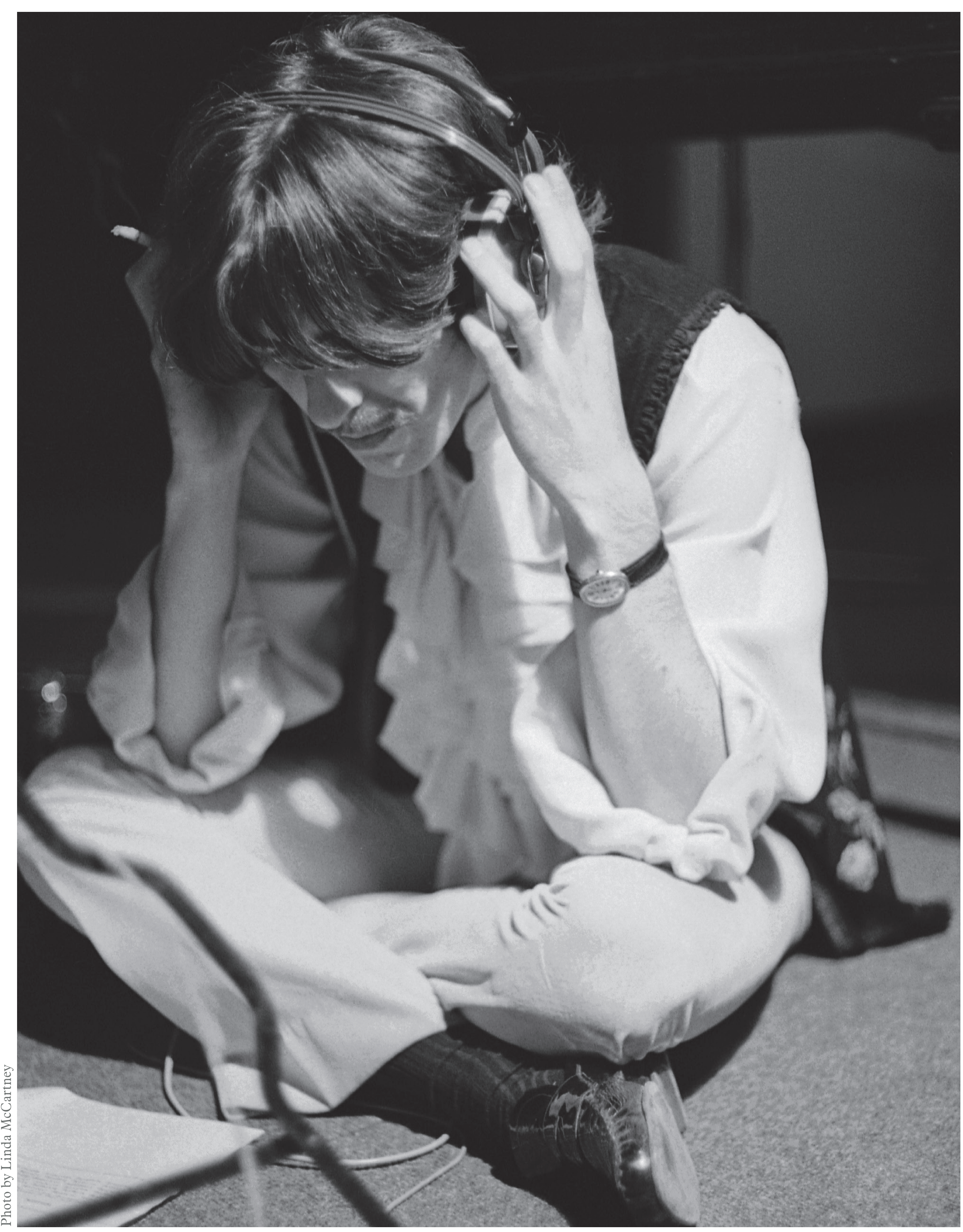


Photo by Linda McCartney

'to cut their pork chops' was replaced by 'to eat their bacon'. 'I wrote that song about two-and-a-half or three years ago, but I never finished it,' George recalled in 1968. 'I had put the lyrics in a book at home and I had completely forgotten about it until last summer when I dug them out.'

George described his song as 'social comment'. Evoking what he saw as the inequity of the class system, he depicted the lives of little piggies and bigger piggies. His extended metaphor resonates with George Orwell's political satire *Animal Farm*, in which the pigs decreed that 'all animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others.' George's handwritten early draft of 'Piggies' reveals an unused verse that has a pun about the omniscient presence of Big Brother in another novel by George Orwell, *1984*: 'You will see them on their trotters at the piggy banks, giving piggy thanks to thee, Pig Brother.' George restored this verse when he sang 'Piggies' on his concert tour of Japan in 1991.

Recording details:
Recorded: 19 and 20 September 1968 – Studio Two and Studio One, Abbey Road
Mono Mix: 11 October 1968 – *Stereo Mix:* 11 October 1968

George: lead vocal, acoustic guitar :
John: harmony vocal :
Paul: bass, harmony vocal :
Ringo: tambourine, kick drum :

Additional Instruments:
Chris Thomas: harpsichord – *Recorded:* 19 September 1968 – Studio One
Four violins, two violas, two cellos – *Recorded:* 10 October 1968 – Studio Two, Abbey Road

Sound Effects tape: Volume 35: Animals And Bees – Pigs

The recording was begun on a four-track tape. Paul's bass was on track one; Ringo played tambourine on two; George's acoustic guitar was on three and his vocal was recorded on four. In contrast to other sessions, where the 'live' vocal was likely to be used in the completed version, George advised 'I'll just be singing to guide you.' In fact, he did not often sing all the way through a performance.

The session for 'Piggies' sprang to life when a harpsichord was recorded to track four, just for the eleventh and final take of the session. An adept keyboard player, Chris Thomas had spotted a harpsichord in Studio One that had been placed there in readiness for a session taking place the next day. During the afternoon of 20 September, Jacqueline du Pré would be recorded playing Monn's Cello Concerto in G Minor with the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Sir John Barbirolli. The harpsichord was played by the Australian virtuoso Valda Aveling. Ken Scott ruled that the instrument must not be wheeled away to Studio Two so, instead, The Beatles' session moved to the big room with Chris playing harpsichord with three of The Beatles. Following take 11, marked as 'basic' on the box, all four members of the group were recorded across the four tracks – laughing. The rather sinister-sounding guffaws were not used in any Beatles recording at the time. However, when George Martin and his son Giles worked on the experimental soundtrack for the Cirque du Soleil show ***LOVE***, released in 2006, they chose to mix The Beatles' laughter into 'Being For The Benefit Of Mr Kite!' during the last verse.

In the second session for 'Piggies', take 11 on the four-track tape was copied to an eight-track tape – becoming take 12. George double-tracked his vocals on tracks six and seven. John and Paul added vocals in the last verse on track five. George and Paul are heard singing harmonies, while John sings the melody two octaves below them. George also made some pig snorting noises, but they were not used in the final mixes. Real pigs grunting, played from the EMI sound effects tape *Volume 35: Animals And Bees*, were added while 'Piggies' was mixed on 11 October. Just through serendipity, the grunts vary slightly in the mono and stereo mixes of 'Piggies'. In the middle section, George's voice was distorted by the use of a frequency filter. As engineer Ken Townsend recalled. 'It chopped off everything above and below the 3.5 kilohertz level, creating a very narrow band of sound.'

When George Martin returned from his holiday and listened to the recordings made in his absence, he proposed writing string arrangements for 'Glass Onion' and 'Piggies'. The string octet was recorded on tracks seven and eight of take 12 of 'Piggies'. Omitting the vocals that were recorded on tracks five and six, **CD Six – Sessions Track 8** is a mix of the instrumental parts that create a 'starched white shirt' character for the song.

Rocky Raccoon

15.08.1968

The song originated in the relaxed atmosphere of communal living in India. Paul recalled that he, John and Donovan were playing guitars on the roof of a bungalow in the ashram: 'We were just sitting around enjoying ourselves, and I started playing the chords of "Rocky Raccoon". You know, just messing around. Originally it was Rocky Sassoon and the three of us just started making up the words. They came very quickly. Eventually I changed it from Sassoon to Raccoon, because it sounded more like a cow-ie [cowboy].'

Starting on the chorus, the version recorded at George's house in May does not have the half-spoken, half-sung introduction heard on the album. Added three months later, this was Paul's affectionate imitation of Lonnie Donegan's preamble to his first skiffle hit in 1955, in which he announced, 'Now, this here's the story about the Rock Island Line…' When 'Rocky Raccoon' was recorded at Abbey Road, the new opening and the middle section, in which the doctor arrives to tend to the song's hapless hero, were partly improvised in the studio. 'I don't quite know the words to that verse yet,' Paul confided after take five.

In a similar approach to 'The Continuing Story Of Bungalow Bill', the song's narrative and imagery are reminiscent of films shown to children at 'the pictures' on Saturday mornings. Paul remarked that the story is like 'a Mack Sennett movie set to music. "Rocky Raccoon" is quirky, very me. I did my tongue-in-cheek parody of a Western and just tried to keep it amusing, really; it's me writing a little one-act play. Rocky Raccoon is some bloke in a raccoon hat like Davy Crockett. The bit I liked about it was him finding Gideon's Bible and thinking, "Some guy called Gideon must have left it for the next guest." I like the idea of Gideon being a character.'

Recording details:
Recorded: 15 August 1968 – Studio Two, Abbey Road
Mono Mix: 15 August 1968 – *Stereo Mix:* 10 October 1968

Paul: lead vocal, backing vocal, guitar :
John: backing vocal, bass, harmonica, accordion :
George: backing vocal, bass :
Ringo: drums :

Additional Instrument:
George Martin: piano – *Recorded:* 15 August 1968

MONO/~~STEREO~~

RECORDING SHEET

Sheet : .... of : .... Class : POP. Overall Title .... Date of Session 6/6/68. Job No : 1069.

ARTISTIC INFORMATION				COSTING INFORMATION			
ARTISTE(S) AND/OR CAST	THE BEATLES.	CONDUCTOR		MATERIALS USED	2 x 811 ¼"	ORDER NUMBER	
		ORCHESTRA		SESSION BOOKED TIME	2:30 - 1200.	COMPANY	PARLO.
		ACCOMPANIMENT		SESSION ACTUAL	2:30 - 2: 45 AM	STUDIO/CONTROL ROOM	No 2.
		ART. DEPT. REP.	MR. G. H. MARTIN.	SET-UP/PLAYBACK	½.	ENGINEERS	GE PMC.

TITLES and MATRIX Nos.	AUTHOR/COMPOSER/ PUBLISHER	REEL NUMBERS	FALSE STARTS	TAKE No.	TAKE DETAILS FROM	TAKE DETAILS TO	DUR.	M	REMARKS
RINGO'S TUNE. (TITLED) THIS IS SOME FRIENDLY		E 68894 4T.	SI	1	COMPLETE.		BEST.		VOCAL. SI TR 3 4. 1 PIANO 2 DRUMS 3 VOCAL ②. 4. VOCAL. Ø
4T - 4T. E 68894 TAKE ⑤. TO.									
E 68892 TAKE ⑦		E 68892		7	COMPLETE.		BEST.		1 RHYTHM PIANO.
SI BASS ON		E 68892	T	7	COMPLETE		BEST.		2 3 BASS. 4 VOCAL'S + VOICES [illegible]
ROUGH RM. 3 COPIES MADE. TAKE BY BEATLES.									3 x 7" PLASTIC SPOOLS.
JOHN LENNON'S SOUND EFFECTS.				1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8	VICARS [illegible]. QUEEN'S MESS. COMEDY [illegible] COMBO. ORGAN [illegible] TEST. NEVILLE CLUB. THEATRE OUTING. APPLAUSE / T.V JINGLE. VARIOUS SOUND EFFECTS.				
COPIED 15 ips TO 7½ ips.				9 10 11 12					1 x 7" PLASTIC SPOOL

Ref. 9864

~~MONO~~/~~STEREO~~ 4T

RECORDING SHEET

Sheet : 1 of : .... Class : POP Overall Title .... Date of Session 22-7-68 Job No : 1069

ARTISTIC INFORMATION				COSTING INFORMATION			
ARTISTE(S) AND/OR CAST	THE BEATLES	CONDUCTOR		MATERIALS USED	2 x 811 (1")	ORDER NUMBER	
		ORCHESTRA		SESSION BOOKED TIME	7 - 10	COMPANY	
		ACCOMPANIMENT		SESSION ACTUAL	7 - 1.40	STUDIO/CONTROL ROOM	1 - 1
		ART. DEPT. REP.	G. H. MARTIN.	SET-UP/PLAYBACK	½ hr / ¼	ENGINEERS	KS PL

TITLES and MATRIX Nos.	AUTHOR/COMPOSER/ PUBLISHER	REEL NUMBERS	FALSE STARTS	TAKE No.	TAKE DETAILS FROM	TAKE DETAILS TO	DUR.	M	REMARKS
DON'T PASS ME BY (INTRO)		E 69670 4T	2	1	COMPLETE				
				3	— " —				
				4	— " —		0.45	Best	
GOODNIGHT		— " —							
				23	— " —		3.09		
				24	— " —		3.05		
			678	25	— " —		3.05		
				29	— " —		3.05		
				30	F - END				
— " —		E 69671 4T		31	COMPLETE		3.11		
				32	— " —		3.07		
				33	— " —		3.04		
				34	— " —		3.08	Best.	SI CHOIR. (MIKE SAMMES) 10.30 — 11.50
									SI VOCAL & CHOIR 11.50 — 1.40

Ref. 9864

'It was a difficult song to record,' Paul recalls, 'because it had to be all in one take. It would have been very hard to edit, because of the quirkiness of the vocal. But it was fun to do.' Finished in one night, 'Rocky Raccoon' evolved take by take as Paul experimented with different words for a spoken introduction and unfinished verse. The instrumental line-up at the start of the session was John playing a six-string Fender VI bass on track one; drums on two; Paul's acoustic guitar and George Martin playing piano on three; and Paul's lead vocal on four. George was in the control room supervising the session while the producer was at the piano in the studio. 'Paul, which verse does the piano come in on?' he asked on the talkback mic before the first recording of the evening. During take four, Paul sang that 'the doctor rolled up his sleeves' and 'Rocky said, "Doc, let's have none of your cock".' Soon after that, the performance came to a halt with Paul admitting, 'Fuck knows where I am!' He then picked out the riff of 'Day Tripper' on his acoustic guitar.

It had been decided by the start of take six to add the piano parts later and so George Martin returned to the control room. **CD Five – Sessions Track 9** is take eight with an improvised coda after the song appears to have ended. The next take was chosen as the best and in a reduction mix became take ten for additional flourishes recorded on track three. These included a 'tack-piano' that was recorded at half-speed to create a Western movie honky-tonk effect when played back at normal speed, an accordion, harmonica and harmonies sung by John, Paul and George. The song's structure is based on a constantly repeating chord sequence of A minor 7 – D7 with suspended 4th – D7 – G7 – C and C with a B bass. The finished recording is a good example of how to keep things fresh throughout a song by introducing various musical punctuation points as Paul unfolds his story of the courageous cowboy in the Davy Crockett hat.

Don't Pass Me By

05.06.1968

Ringo had been credited as a co-writer for 'What Goes On' on *Rubber Soul* and the instrumental 'Flying' featured in *Magical Mystery Tour*, but 'Don't Pass Me By' was his first solo composition to be recorded by The Beatles. The song had a long gestation. In an interview for a New Zealand radio station in June 1964, Paul mentioned 'Ringo's first venture into songwriting. A beautiful melody.' Ringo responded that 'It was written as a country and western, but Paul and John singing it with that blues feeling has knocked me out.' A month later, Ringo discussed his song again with Brian Matthew on the BBC radio show *Top Gear*: 'I've written a good one, but no one seems to want to record it. Oh, Paul may record it.' 'No,' Paul countered. 'The thing is, I was doing the tune for you to sing it.' 'I don't want to sing it,' Ringo replied.

Paul had explained in 1964 that 'Unfortunately, there's never enough time to fit Ringo's song on an album. He never finishes it.' With the extra scope provided by a double album, Ringo's song was, by 1968, a definite contender for the group's next release. In fact, it was the third track to be started at Abbey Road, following 'Revolution 1' and 'Revolution 9'. 'It was great to get my first song down, one that I had written,' Ringo remembered. 'It was a very exciting time for me and everyone was really helpful, and recording that crazy violinist was a thrilling moment.'

Recording details:
Recorded: 5 June 1968 – Studio Three, Abbey Road;
6 June and 12 July 1968 – Studio Two, Abbey Road;
Mono Mix: 11 October 1968 – *Stereo Mix:* 11 October 1968

Ringo: lead vocal, piano, sleigh bells, percussion
Paul: piano, bass, drums

Additional Instrument:
Jack Fallon: violin – *Recorded:* 12 July 1968

A Beginning
Recorded: 22 July 1968 – Studio One, Abbey Road
Twelve violins, three violas, three cellos, three flutes, clarinet, French horn, vibraphone, double bass, harp

Only two Beatles – Ringo and Paul – were involved in recording 'Don't Pass Me By', but John was also at the session on 5 June. He is heard on the tape singing a brief bit of 'You Are My Sunshine' between takes. In the first session for 'Ringo's Tune (Untitled)', Ringo played piano, with its sound 'wobbled' by being put through a revolving Leslie speaker, while Paul played drums. They were satisfied with take three as a foundation to work upon. Paul commented, 'I think that's got it.' 'I think we've got something there, George!' Ringo suggested to George Martin listening in the control room. An unnumbered take combined the piano and drums on track one, while Ringo sang a lead vocal on track four. Another reduction mix, take four, kept the piano and drums separate on tracks one and two. Further 'bounces' from take three created take five and then take seven, which had drums and percussion on track one, bass and piano on track three and Ringo's ADT-ed vocal on track four. On the second day of recording, the title changed to 'This Is Some Friendly'. At the end of the master version on the four-track tape, The Beatles are heard chanting 'This is some friendly' and Ringo whispered, 'I've seen a few Friendlies and this is one.'

John was interviewed at Abbey Road on this day by DJ Kenny Everett, who managed to coax Ringo and Paul to join him to create some sung jingles for a new BBC Radio 1 show. Having joked around with Cuddly Ken, John later took part in a serious and intense interview for the TV programme *Release*, in which he said, 'The universal sorrow just hits you about once a week now. Bang. And then you say, "Oh, well. Get on with it."' The sixth day of June had been a very grim day. During the morning, UK time, the death of Democratic Presidential candidate Robert Kennedy was announced. He had been shot the previous day in Los Angeles.

Over a month went by before Jack Fallon arrived at Abbey Road to record his fiddle part on track two. The violin was not his main instrument. For 30 years, he had played bass with many jazz greats from Duke Ellington and Hoagy Carmichael to Django Reinhardt and Sarah Vaughan. Nevertheless, he played violin in a suitable country music style. The original version of 'Don't Pass Me By' was longer; it was shortened at the mixing stage by editing out a repeat of the first verse following the false ending. As demonstrated by **CD Four – Sessions Track 2**, Ringo's tune was at one point going to be introduced by a soaring orchestral prelude written by George Martin. The discarded piece, recorded on 22 July, was used to open *Anthology 3* and given a new title – 'A Beginning'. A different recording of part of it was also heard during The Beatles' animated film *Yellow Submarine*.

Anthology 3 contained the edited version of 'Don't Pass Me By' before the fiddle overdub was added. The mono and stereo mixes of the track released in 1968 run at different speeds. The mono version was speeded up, raising the key by a semitone; it also has more of the fiddle part on it.



Photo by Linda McCartney

Why Don’t We Do It In The Road?

09.10.1968

‘“Why Don’t We Do It In The Road?” was a primitive statement to do with sex or to do with freedom really,’ Paul recounted. ‘I like it. It’s just so outrageous that I like it.’ The idea for the words was triggered by observing two monkeys copulating on the road in India. Using the simple 12-bar blues form allowed Paul to demonstrate his vocal versatility and melodic invention. Certainly, it is the power of his performance as a rock ’n’ roll singer that elevates the elementary material.

The penultimate track to be recorded for the double album, it was placed in the running order before Paul’s gentle acoustic song ‘I Will’: ‘On one hand, you get “Why Don’t We Do It In The Road?” then you get “I Will”, which is pretty smoochy stuff. It’s me feeling both of them, the same fellow, and I wrote both of them.’

Recording details:
Recorded: 9 October 1968 – Studio One, Abbey Road; 10 October 1968 – Studio Three, Abbey Road
Mono Mix: 16 or 17 October 1968 – *Stereo Mix:* 16 or 17 October 1968

Paul: lead vocal, acoustic guitar, piano, electric guitar, bass, percussion, handclaps :
Ringo: drums :

With his technical expertise and inspired inventions, engineer Ken Townsend played a significant part in the history of The Beatles’ recordings, but this is the only time he balanced one of the group’s sessions. ‘My one-minute-40-seconds claim to fame!’ Ken laughs. ‘Paul said, “I’ve got this idea for a song can we give it a try?”’ Ken found Studio One was free so quickly set it up for Paul to record. ‘It was laid out for an orchestra for the following day. I placed Paul on the left-hand side so I could see him through the window. That studio is a huge great barn – 220,00 cubic feet.’ Indeed, one of the distinctive characteristics of the sound of ‘Why Don’t We Do It In The Road?’ was due to the long reverberation caused by the size of the room. Five takes were recorded of Paul experimenting with different ways of singing the song. ‘You look a bit worried,’ Paul said to Ken, who was surprised by the very wide dynamics of the first incomplete take.

Paul sings the song’s only verse four times in take four, released on *Anthology 3* in 1996. ‘Well, well, well, what do you think of all that? Do you think that I could do it better?’ Paul asked at the end. ‘I think I could do it a bit better actually. See, I wanna just try and do one quiet verse, one loud verse; and then that’s it, really.’ **CD Six – Sessions Track 17** is the fifth take, the performance onto which overdubs were made – the first being a piano recorded on 9 October. In the end, however, only a few fragments of the vocal and acoustic guitar on this recording survived on the released version. During the following night’s session of overdubs, Paul played electric slide guitar and sang a new vocal. Recorded on track two of the four-track tape, Ringo overdubbed drums while Paul played bass.

John and George were not involved at all in the recording of ‘Why Don’t We Do It In The Road?’, but this was not unusual in 1968. Only 16 of the 30 tracks on ‘The White Album’ featured the participation of all four Beatles. ‘We had no problems with that,’ Ringo recalled in *The Beatles Anthology*.

I Will

16.09.1968

‘It’s still one of my favourite melodies that I’ve written,’ Paul reckons. ‘You just occasionally get lucky with a melody.’ In spring 1968, the tune had been around for ‘quite a long time, but I didn’t have lyrics to it’. Playing it to Donovan in India, Paul tried to come up with suitable words, but remained dissatisfied. The song was still not finished when The Beatles gathered at George’s house to assemble demos for the next album, so the tune was not presented to the group at that point. Four months later, Paul had written an enigmatic lyric, brimming with hopeful expectation of a perfect romance that might be just around the corner.

In a radio interview in 1968, Paul explained how the rhythmic flavour of South American music in ‘I Will’ had filtered through from the early days of The Beatles’ performances. ‘When we played in Hamburg, we didn’t just do rock all evening, because we had businessmen coming in and saying, “Play a mambo. Can you do a rhumba?” We couldn’t just keep saying “No”, so we had to get into mambos and rhumbas a bit. So this kind of thing is like a smoochy Latin American “The Girl From Ipanema”.’ That bossa nova song, with music by Antônio Carlos Jobim, had become universally popular during the mid 1960s thanks to a version recorded by Stan Getz and João Gilberto with the beguiling singing of Astrud Gilberto. ‘That’s why there’s great variety in this LP,’ Paul reflected. ‘We’re not completely just one kind of group.’

Recorded during the session for ‘I Will’ on 16 September 1968:

Can You Take Me Back?
‘Jam – Unidentified’ was written on the tape box to describe a song improvised by Paul during the ‘I Will’ session. A short extract from it was placed on *The Beatles* as an interlude between ‘Cry Baby Cry’ and the audio collage ‘Revolution 9’; this is the complete performance. John’s prompt to Paul during the improvisation, ‘Are you happy here, honey? Are you happy here living with us?’ are questions heard during the speech track ‘Voices Of Old People’ on the LP *Bookends* by Simon and Garfunkel, released in April 1968. The comments of residents at homes ‘for the aged’ that make up the sound montage were recorded by Art Garfunkel to set the scene for the next thematic song on side one of *Bookends*, ‘Old Friends’.

Blue Moon
During the session for ‘I Will’, Paul, John and Ringo had fun busking various songs. ‘Blue Moon’ was written by Richard Rodgers and Lorenz Hart in the 1930s. Like many compositions from that era, it was revived in the rock ’n’ roll era – most successfully when The Marcels made an irreverent doo-wop version in 1961. More influential on The Beatles’ performance was the moody version recorded by Elvis Presley at Sun Studios in 1954, which was a top ten single in the UK and also released on a British ten-inch LP called *The Best Of Elvis* in 1957.

Step Inside Love
Paul led John and Ringo into a performance of a theme song he was commissioned to write to welcome viewers each week to the BBC TV variety show *Cilla*. The show was first broadcast on 30 January 1968 and Ringo was a guest for the second of the series on 6 February. A good friend from The Beatles’ pre-fame days at the Cavern Club in Liverpool, Cilla Black was also managed by Brian Epstein. Her first single, produced by George Martin in 1963, was the Lennon-McCartney composition, ‘Love Of The Loved’. The following year she took another of the partnership’s songs, ‘It’s For You’, to number seven in the UK

EMITAPE

MR. G. MARTIN. PARLOPHONE 1069.

Tape No. 70549 · 4TRACK. **Identity** THE BEATLES

	Subject		START	FINISH		Remarks
	VARIOUS ADLIBS.					
	(PAUL + ~~[illegible]~~ JOHN.)					
	STEP INSIDE LOVE — RUN-THROUGH NOT COMP.					
		TK35				
	LOS PARANOIAS					
	THE WAY YOU LOOK TONIGHT	TK36				
	JAM (UNIDENTIFIED)					2249
	~~[illegible]~~	TK39				
	CAN YOU TAKE ME BACK.					
	PLEASE RETURN TO TAPE LIBRARY					

TAPE LENGTH	N° 2-7	ENGINEER KMS - JS - MWS / DATE VARIOUS DATES	TAPE SPEED 15"/sec.

chart. 'Step Inside Love' was also a top ten British hit. Paul made a demo version of his song with Cilla at Chappell Studios in London. Thirty years later, this recording was released in the Cilla Black collection *1963–1973: The Abbey Road Decade*.

Los Paranoias
The rhythmic groove of the trio's performance of 'Step Inside Love' reminded them of the rhumbas, mambos and sambas played by bands for ballroom dancing. South American music was particularly popular in the 1950s and remained a light music staple in the 1960s. For example, Edmundo Ros and His Latin-American Orchestra had a weekly slot on *Sunday Special* on BBC Radio 2 at the time of this Beatles session. 'Swing, à la Latina!' Paul quips. After he announces the fictitious band name Joel Peraries and The Perarie Wallflowers, Paul is amused by John's response: 'Los Paranoias' – a Beatles in-joke, which might have been included amongst the wordplay in the 1969 track 'Sun King'. 'We started joking, saying "quando paramucho". We just made it up,' John recalled. 'We just strung any Spanish words [together] that sounded vaguely like something. One we missed. We could have had paranoia, but we forgot all about it. We used to call ourselves Los Paranoias.' Their spontaneous parody with that title is in the same vein as 'You Know My Name (Look Up The Number)', a lampoon of the British cabaret scene.

Recording details:
Recorded: 16 and 17 September 1968 – Studio Two, Abbey Road
Mono Mix: 26 September 1968 – *Stereo Mix:* 14 October 1968

Paul: lead vocal, backing vocal, acoustic guitars, 'sung bass' :
John: skulls, maracas :
Ringo: drums :

There were 67 takes during the first session for 'I Will'. Without hearing the tapes, that high number might lead to a conclusion that recording Paul's song was a laborious and frustrating process. Far from it. The audio on the tapes reveals this session to be extremely good-natured with many humorous moments, as on take 29 (CD Six – Sessions Track 3), and several excursions into other songs, just for fun. As usual, the logged total of takes includes many false starts and breakdowns. *Anthology 3*, released in 1996, includes the first take. Except for some word changes, it is fairly close to the version used as the master. But, as he had done with 'Blackbird' and 'Hey Jude', Paul was keen to keep trying various ways of singing 'I Will'.

Ringo and John provide percussion. Ringo taps out a rhythm with rim shots on a snare drum and uses cymbals, kick drum and tom toms sparingly. John alternates between shaking maracas and beating time on a kind of wood block called a skull. 'Rattle dem skulls!' he jokes at the end of a take. CD Six – Sessions Track 1 is take 13 with percussion from Ringo and John on track one; Paul's acoustic guitar on three and his vocal on four of a four-track tape. Take 19 was not 'I Will', but 'Jam – Unidentified'. Although the snippet from it heard on the album was uncredited, it has become known as 'Can You Take Me Back?' (CD Six – Sessions Track 6). Before take 28, Paul sang the oldie 'Blue Moon' (CD Six – Sessions Track 2). He laughs after accidentally switching the words 'love' and 'dream' from the song's original lyric 'Without a dream in my heart, without a love of my own'. Paul also sang a few bits of the Dorothy Fields and Jerome Kern song 'The Way You Look Tonight' from the Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers film *Swing Time*.

When reels were changed on the tape machine, the group played 'Step Inside Love' (CD Six – Sessions Track 4). The new tape was started in time to catch the performance from the middle of the first chorus, followed by the second verse. In 'Los Paranoias' (CD Six – Sessions Track 5), Paul sings a trumpet solo and improvises a lyric. The recent Latin-styled interpretation of 'Light My Fire' by José Feliciano may have prompted some of the ideas that popped into Paul's head, such as 'come and get higher by the fire'. There is some impressive skulduggery in this performance too.

'That was it, wasn't it? John asked after take 65. It was. The recording was transferred to an eight-track tape and numbered take 68. On 17 September, Paul sang his impersonation of a bass guitar on track five, which also had maracas added during the middle-eight and end section. He also played some melodic lines on a 12-string guitar. When the mono mix was made, Paul's 'sung bass' begins with the second verse. It is present from the start in the stereo version. Both mixes added ADT to Paul's lead vocal from the middle-eight onwards.

Julia

13.10.1968

The previous two tracks had shown the wide range encompassed by Paul's songwriting and singing. Similarly, side two concluded with 'Julia' – John's extraordinarily tender song that is light years away from the raucous rock of 'Yer Blues' and 'Everybody's Got Something To Hide Except Me And My Monkey' on side three. 'I think people have always got it wrong about Paul and John being such opposites,' Linda McCartney observed in *Sixties: Portrait of an Era*. 'In my opinion, when it came to creativity, they weren't that different. They both had a tough side and a sensitive side.'

The Beatles: The Authorised Biography by Hunter Davies was published on 30 September 1968, less than two months before the release of 'The White Album'. The book's candid details about John's childhood made it obvious to readers that 'Julia' was a tribute to his mother. What was not so clear at the time was the presence of another woman in the song. 'Julia was my mother,' John explained in 1980. 'But it was sort of a combination of Yoko and my mother blended into one.'

John's parents had separated when he was five years old. When his mother went to live with a new man, John was raised by his indomitable Aunt Mimi, who became his legal guardian. In his teenage years, there were sometimes tense moments at home, especially after the sudden death in 1955 of Mimi's husband, John's Uncle George – a gentle ally. 'We got on fine. He was nice and kind,' John told Hunter Davies. As an escape from Mimi's strict discipline, John had re-established a relationship with his fun-seeking mother. 'He really loved his mum more than anything,' Paul remembered. 'She was a very beautiful woman; very good looking, with long red hair. When you're the son of a very beautiful woman, it's got to add something.' They also bonded through their shared love of rock 'n' roll music, which Julia encouraged. The first guitar John owned was bought for him by his mother in 1957. When Julia was knocked down by a car near Mimi's house and died in July 1958, John was devastated. 'I lost her twice,' he reflected. 'Once as a five-year-old … and once again when she physically died … It was the worst thing that ever happened to me. We'd caught up so much. We could communicate. We got on. She was great.'

John started writing 'Julia' in India, before his intimate relationship with Yoko Ono had begun. However, they had met in 1966, and John was intrigued by the frequent messages he received from her while he was in Rishikesh. 'She would write things like "I am a cloud. Watch for me in the sky,"' he recalled. While 'silent cloud, touch me' may

EMITAPE

Mr G. Martin. 1069

Tape No. E70411 **Identity** "THE BEATLES"

	Subject		START	FINISH		Remarks
	Julia.	1	0.12	2.67		240. TK1 ~~Acoustic~~ Vocal
		2	3.05	S/P		TK2 ~~Acoustic~~ Acoustic + Vocal
		3	5.13	8.08	Best	2.48 TK3 Vocal. TK4 ~~Vocal~~ Acoustic

TAPE ~~LENGTH~~ TYPE 8"	STUDIO:- 2-2 Machine No.:- BTS.	ENGINEER K. Scott – J. Smith. DATE 13 October 1968	TAPE SPEED 15 I.P.S

2244

have been inspired by that thought, there is also a direct reference to Yoko, because the meaning of her name in Japanese is 'ocean child'. Some of the other imagery in the lyric is reminiscent of the Lebanese poet Kahlil Gibran, whose books in English written in the 1920s – particularly, *The Prophet* – had gained renewed currency in the 1960s. The first line of 'Julia' echoes a phrase in Gibran's collection *Sand and Foam*: 'Half of what I say is meaningless; but I say it so the other half may reach you.' The poet's aphorism 'When life does not find a singer to sing her heart, she produces a philosopher to speak her mind' also has a resonance in John's song.

Two years later, John expressed the emotional trauma he suffered when he was 17 in 'Mother' and 'My Mummy's Dead' on his album *John Lennon/Plastic Ono Band*. The visceral rawness of those songs, stripped of any poetic imagery, is in stark contrast to the sensitive song of love he sang for Julia and Yoko in 1968.

Recording details:
Recorded: 13 October 1968 – Studio Two, Abbey Road
Mono Mix: 13 October 1968 – *Stereo Mix:* 13 October 1968

John: lead vocal, guitars :

The final song to be completed for 'The White Album' was recorded on Sunday 13 October. The deadline for delivery of the double album was only days away, so weekend working had become a necessity. The Esher demo of 'Julia' has a double-tracked vocal, two guitars and an experimental harmony from Paul on some of the lines, such as 'so I sing a song of love…' The studio recording is very similar to the demo. For 'Julia', keeping the arrangement simple was the guiding principle and, in the end, no attempts at adding harmonies and other instruments were ever made.

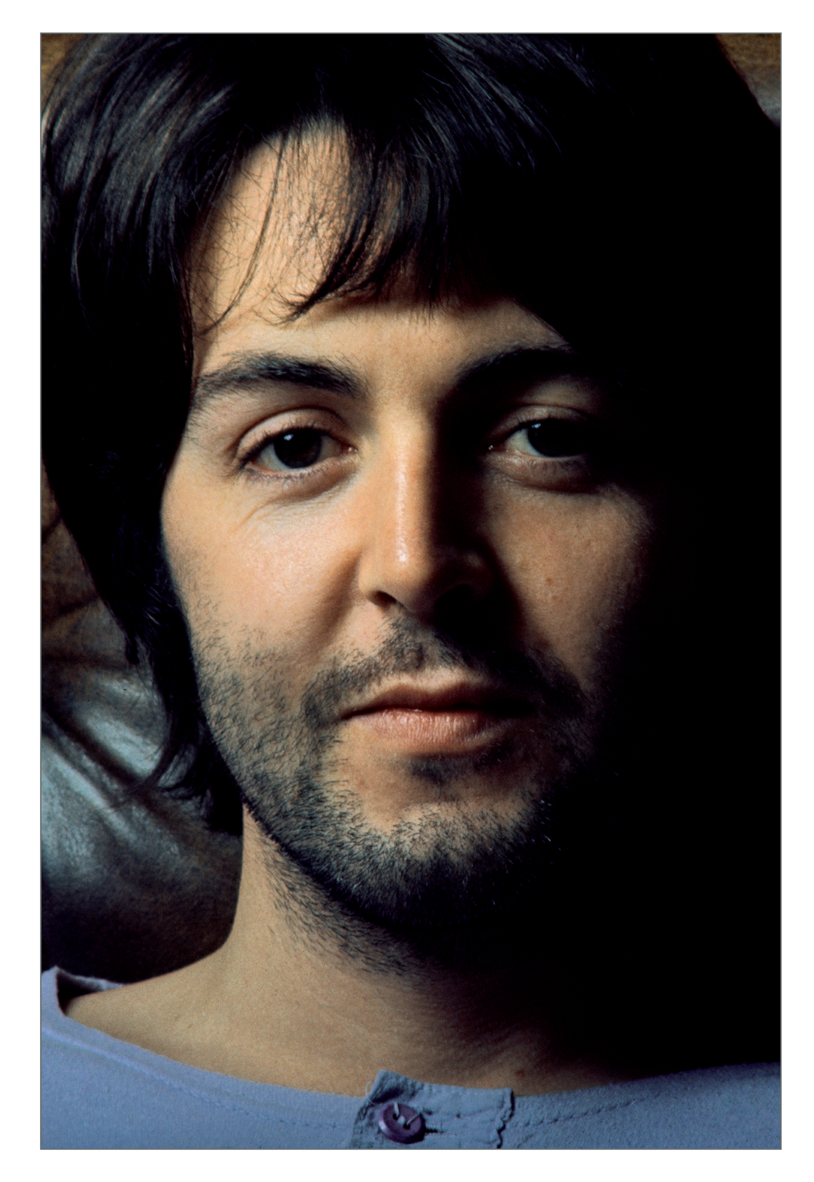
George Martin and Paul were in the control room encouraging John as he strove to perfect his performance. Only three takes were logged on the recording sheet. However, during research for this 50th anniversary project, there was a jaw-dropping surprise. When listening to all of the four-track tape for the session, it was discovered that the three 'proper' takes had been recorded over a tape of John's rehearsals from earlier in the session. Following the master, take three, some of those rehearsals remained on the reel. CD Six – Sessions Track 18 features the last 4'25" of audio on the tape. We hear John in conversation with George Martin discussing the challenge of trying to master the complicated guitar accompaniment while singing. 'It's very hard to sing this, you know,' he says. Rather than finger-picking it, John tried strumming the guitar while standing up. Then reverting to the familiar picking, John sang a version of 'Julia' that no one knew existed until now.

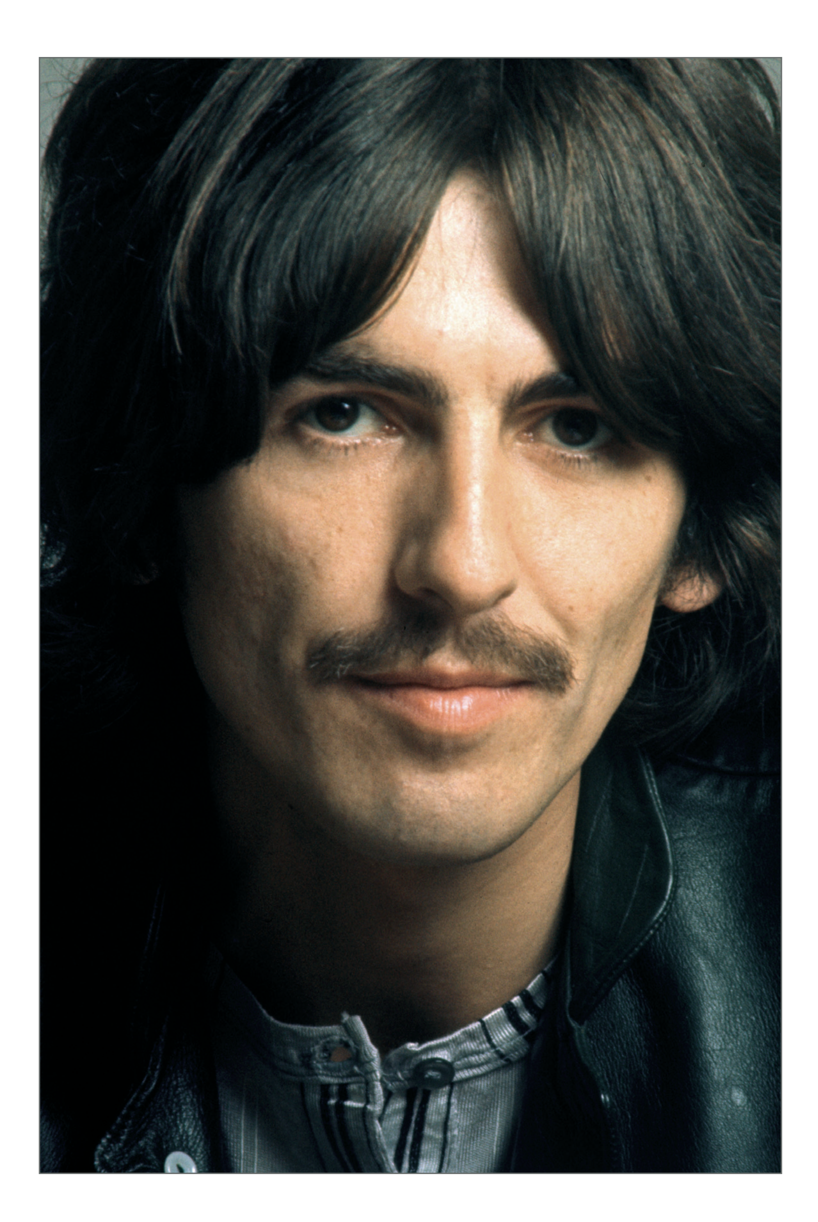
Anthology 3 includes take two that followed that rehearsal. By this point, John had put a capo on the second fret of his guitar to raise the key to D major. It had also been decided that John would do two complete performances. Having recorded the first version of take three, he overdubbed a second one alongside it on the four-track tape. He sang different parts of the song in each of the versions. This way, certain sections of the vocal were double-tracked and he could overlap his singing as he moved from chorus to verse on the word 'Julia'.

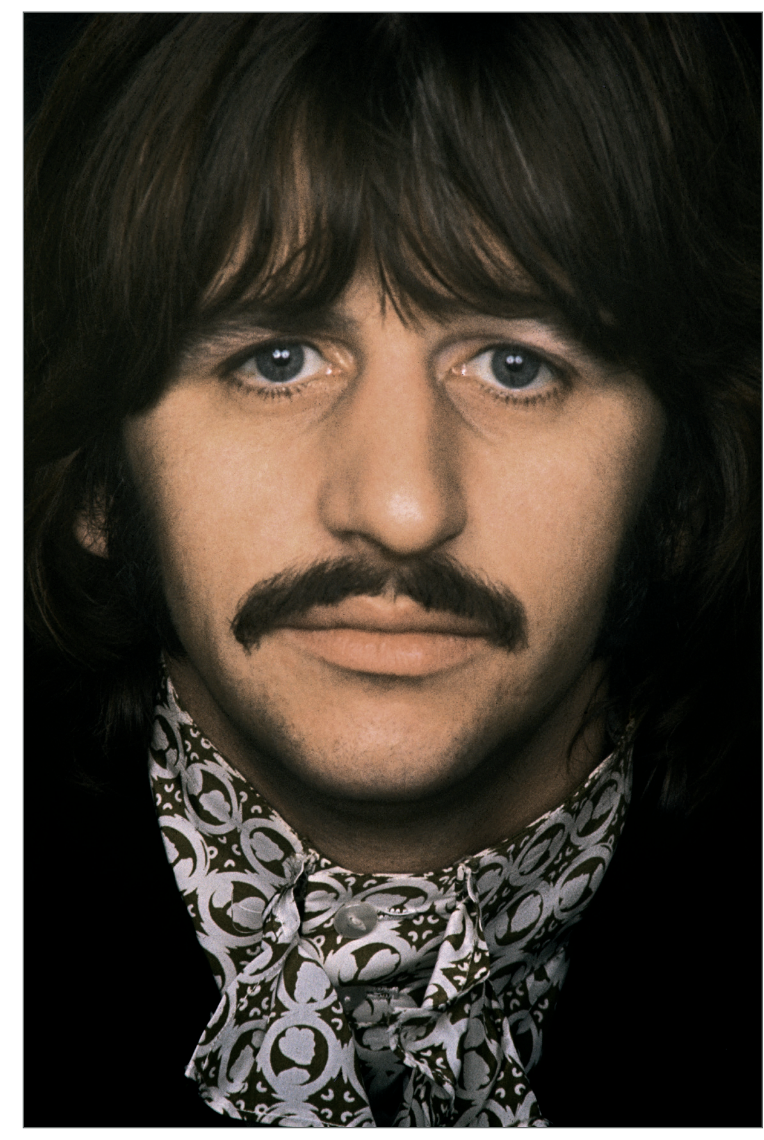
After over four months of intensive night-time sessions, even at this late stage of their work on the album, the atmosphere in the studio sounded wholly cooperative and positive. The result was, for 'The White Album', one of John's most emotional and affecting performances … and – 50 years later – a thrilling performance that has unexpectedly come to light.



Photos by John Kelly







MONO/STEREO

RECORDING SHEET

Sheet: ______ of: ______ Class: POP Overall Title: ______ Date of Session: 18-Sept 68 Job No: 1069

ARTISTIC INFORMATION			COSTING INFORMATION			
ARTISTE(S) AND/OR CAST	THE BEATLES	CONDUCTOR		MATERIALS USED	1x8 H(4) / 2x811-7''	ORDER NUMBER	
		ORCHESTRA		SESSION BOOKED TIME	5.00 - 12.00	COMPANY	
		ACCOMPANIMENT		SESSION ACTUAL	5.00 - 4.30	STUDIO/CONTROL ROOM	2-2
		ART. DEPT. REP.	MR. C. THOMAS.	SET-UP/PLAYBACK	½ - 1hr.	ENGINEERS	KMS-MWS

TITLES and MATRIX Nos.	AUTHOR/COMPOSER/ PUBLISHER	REEL NUMBERS	FALSE STARTS	TAKE No.	TAKE DETAILS FROM	TAKE DETAILS TO	DUR.	M	REMARKS
BIRTHDAY.		E70434		1	— B/S	—	1.51		
		4TRACK.		2	— COMPLETE	—	2.34		
			3-9	10	— "	—	2.36		
			11-12	13	— "	—	2.36		
			14	15	— "	—	2.37		
			16	17	— "	—	2.38		
			18	19	— "	—	2.36		✓ 1A BASIC
				20	— "	—			
			21	✓					
		E70435 8TRACK		22	— COMPLETE	—	2.36		BEST 4TR → 8TR COPY 1ST
	REMIX	4.30AM —		5.00					
BIRTHDAY.		E70436.		RM1	— COMPLETE	—	2.36		BEST.

Ref. 9864

MONO/~~STEREO~~

RECORDING SHEET

Sheet: 1 of: 1 Class: POP Overall Title: Tape Copying + 4track + Mono Reduction. Date of Session: 15 6 August 1968 Job No: 1069

ARTISTIC INFORMATION			COSTING INFORMATION			
ARTISTE(S) AND/OR CAST	The Beatles	CONDUCTOR		MATERIALS USED	1x8'' (E) / 4x5'' Spools (1 With Tape) / 2x8'' (4track)	ORDER NUMBER	
		ORCHESTRA		SESSION BOOKED TIME	7 - 10	COMPANY	
		ACCOMPANIMENT		SESSION ACTUAL	7 - 3.00.	STUDIO/CONTROL ROOM	2-2
		ART. DEPT. REP.	Mr G. Martin.	SET-UP/PLAYBACK	½	ENGINEERS	KS - JS

TITLES and MATRIX Nos.	AUTHOR/COMPOSER/ PUBLISHER	REEL NUMBERS	FALSE STARTS	TAKE No.	TAKE DETAILS FROM	TAKE DETAILS TO	DUR.	M	REMARKS
Rocky Racoon.		E69232 (4track)	1	2	Complete.		3.49		
			3-4	5	— "	—	2.54		
				6	— "	—	3.07		
				7	— "	—	4.10		
				8	— "	—	6.10		
				9	— "	—	3.37		Best.
Rocky Racoon		E69233 (4track)		10	— "	—	3.37		Best
Yer Blues				1	— "	—	4.13		*
				2	— "	—	4.13		*.

*Cut Out And Taken Away By Mr G. Harrison, And Mr R. Starkey, On Two Five inch Plastic Spools

(*) Cut Out And Taken Away By Mr P. McCartney And Mr J. Lennon On Two Five Inch Plastic Spools

TITLES and MATRIX Nos.	AUTHOR/COMPOSER/ PUBLISHER	REEL NUMBERS	FALSE STARTS	TAKE No.	TAKE DETAILS FROM	TAKE DETAILS TO	DUR.	M	REMARKS
Rocky Racoon		E69234 (¼)		RM1	Complete		3.33		Best.
Rocky Racoon.				1	— "	—	3.33		(*)
				2	— "	—	3.33		(*)

R Starkey
G Harrison

Ref. 9864

Birthday

18.09.1968

The spark of inspiration for the song was the broadcast on BBC television of the best rock 'n' roll movie ever – *The Girl Can't Help It*. When first shown in British cinemas in early 1957, the film gave rock-mad teenagers a rare opportunity to see the mysterious American artists whose records they loved, but had never seen in concert or on TV. Up on the big screen in cinemascope and 'De Luxe' colour, alongside voluptuous Jayne Mansfield, were musical heroes Little Richard, Gene Vincent, Fats Domino and a charismatic newcomer, Eddie Cochran. When Paul met John for the first time in July 1957, he impressed him with his word-perfect performance of the intricate song Eddie sang in the movie – '20 Flight Rock'. Cochran's sequence of UK hits started sixteen months later with 'Summertime Blues'. At a time when few people had equipment at home to record from TV, and no access to buy copies of films, the transmission of *The Girl Can't Help It* at 9.05pm on 18 September 1968 was an unmissable event.

'We wanted to see it,' Paul related, 'so we started recording at five o'clock. And we said, "Well, we'll do something, we'll make up a backing track." So we kept it very simple – a 12-bar blues kind of thing. And we stuck a few bits here and there in it, with no idea what the song was or what was going to go on top of it. We just said, "Okay, 12 bars in A, and we'll change to D, and then we'll do a few beats in C." And we really just did it like that… a random thing. We didn't have time for anything else.' After everyone in the studio had nipped up the road to Paul's house to watch *The Girl Can't Help It*, they felt fired up by the thrilling performances in the movie. 'We went back to the studio again,' Paul continued, 'then made up some words to go with it all, which were "They say it's your birthday, well, it's my birthday too, yay." We hadn't ever thought of it before then. And it's one of my favourites because of that.'

John also remembered that the song, 'just made up on the spot', was written by 'both of us'. He also believed that 'Paul wanted to write a song like "Happy, Happy Birthday Baby", the old 50s hit [by The Tune Weavers].' Paul agreed: 'That is 50-50 John and me. I don't recall it being anybody's birthday, but the other reason for doing it is that, if you have a song that refers to Christmas or a birthday, it adds to the life of the song; because if it's a good song, people will pull it out on birthday shows.'

Recording details:
Recorded: 18 September 1968 – Studio Two, Abbey Road
Mono Mix: 18 September 1968 – *Stereo Mix:* 14 October 1968

Paul: lead vocal, bass, piano :
John: vocal, electric guitar :
George: electric guitar, tambourine :
Ringo: drums, handclaps :

Pattie Harrison and Yoko Ono: backing vocals :
Mal Evans: handclaps :

It was an exciting night of music that produced in one session, with some time out for dinner and *The Girl Can't Help It*, the completed recording of 'Birthday'. The foundation of the song was made on a four-track tape that contains 20 takes, including false starts and breakdowns. The clear annotation on the tape box explodes some myths about who played what: track one – John (elec guitar), track two – Ringo (drums), track three – Paul (bass) and track four – George (elec guitar). CD Six – Sessions Track 7 is take two with John's guitar placed towards the left and George's guitar towards the right of the stereo picture. Paul is heard yelling over the drum break to count out eight bars before the guitars rejoin for the middle section. Before take 15, John picked out the opening riff of Fleetwood Mac's current UK hit 'Need Your Love So Bad', written by Little Willie John.

The four tracks of take 19 were transferred to an eight-track tape to make space for overdubs. Vocals by Paul and John with handclaps by Ringo and Mal Evans were recorded on tracks seven and eight. Tambourine was allocated to track six, which Mal mentioned in *The Beatles Book Monthly* was played by George 'with a gloved hand to avoid getting more blisters'. Mal also revealed that the word 'Birthday' during the choruses was sung by Yoko Ono and Pattie Harrison. Track five includes extra tambourine, snare drum and a 'wah-wah' piano. The unusual effect on the piano was made by putting its sound through a Vox Conqueror guitar amplifier and speaker cabinet. The amp has a mid-range boost (MRB) function, which jumps between the frequencies. Having suggested switching between the settings to warp the piano's sound, Ken Scott found himself operating the MRB: 'I plugged it up to show them what I meant. When John heard it, he immediately said, "Yeah, that's great. You do it," and made me stay there turning the knob in time with the beat. I was terrified looking up at the window and seeing them all staring down at me while hoping that my time[keeping] was on [the beat].' It was, of course; this being one of those nights when everything fell into place to create a song and recording from scratch.

Yer Blues

13.08.1968

When naming the febrile blues song he had written in India, John decided to give it a flippant title. 'There was a self-consciousness about singing blues,' he explained in 1970. 'Like everybody else, we were all listening to Sleepy John Estes and all that in art school. But to sing it, was something else. I'm self-conscious about doing it. Paul was saying, "Don't call it 'Yer Blues', just say it straight." But I was self-conscious and I went for "Yer Blues".' 'Yer' (meaning your) was a colloquial replacement for 'the' in the UK during the 1960s. Alf Garnett in the TV comedy *Till Death Us Do Part* habitually used it in phrases such as 'You got yer upper class and yer working class.'

The title 'Yer Blues' suggests an element of parody. During 1968, the album charts on both sides of the Atlantic included records by white British and American groups – such as Big Brother & The Holding Company, Canned Heat, Chicken Shack, Cream, Fleetwood Mac and John Mayall's Blues Breakers – singing blues songs originated by black artists. 'Can Blue Men Sing The Whites' ('or are they hypocrites?') was an accurate send-up of the genre by The Bonzo Dog Band, released in the same month as *The Beatles*, November 1968. But, like the British blues movement itself, John's song was sincere and passionate. It is no joke; The Beatles' visceral performance of it makes that very clear. 'Feel so suicidal even hate my rock 'n' roll' is a line dripping with desperation when sung by rock 'n' roll fanatic John.

The acoustic demo recording made in George's home, Kinfauns, in Esher was a blueprint that was followed closely for the electric version made at Abbey Road. However, by the time John sang the song in the studio, he had modified some of the words. In the first draft captured on tape in Esher, he had sung, 'My mother was of the earth, my father was of the sky, But I am of the universe, And that's the reason why.' By August, he had changed the verse to 'My mother was of the sky, my father was of the earth, But I am of the universe, And you know what it's worth.' There was also a significant alteration relating to 'Dylan's Mr Jones'. This is a reference to Bob Dylan's 'Ballad Of A Thin Man' on *Highway 61 Revisited*, released in August 1965. At the end of each verse, Dylan delivers a caustic put-down – probably aimed at a bemused, conservative



Photo by Linda McCartney

journalist – 'Something is happening here, but you don't know what it is, do you, Mr Jones?' In John's demo of 'Yer Blues', he described feeling 'insecure', rather than 'suicidal, just like Dylan's Mr Jones'.

Musically, 'Yer Blues' is not in a standard blues format. The verses are in 3/4 time, until the switch to the more usual 4/4 rhythm during the section following 'hate my rock 'n' roll'. Written in E – a common key for guitarists to play the blues – the introduction of the G chord for 'if I ain't dead or ready' is not a standard change within a normally three-chord blues structure.

Despite John's initial self-consciousness about writing in the blues idiom, he chose to perform 'Yer Blues' at two concerts with other musicians. He, Eric Clapton (guitar), Keith Richards (bass) and Mitch Mitchell (drums) played it under the moniker The Dirty Mac on 11 December 1968 for the TV special *The Rolling Stones Rock And Roll Circus*. The programme was shelved until it was officially released 28 years later. In September 1969, John sang 'Yer Blues' at a Canadian rock festival backed by Eric Clapton, Klaus Voormann on bass and drummer Alan White. Credited to The Plastic Ono Band, a recording of this dynamic performance was released on *Live Peace In Toronto 1969*.

Recording details:
Recorded: 13 and 14 August 1968 – Room 2A and Studio Two,
Abbey Road; 20 August 1968 – Studio Three, Abbey Road
Mono Mix: 14 and 20 August 1968 – *Stereo Mix:* 14 October 1968

John: lead vocal, guitar :
Paul: vocal, bass :
George: guitar :
Ringo: drums :

During the evening of 13 August 1968, The Beatles had efficiently recorded from scratch 'Sexy Sadie'. This was a 're-remake' of a song that they felt had eluded them when they performed it over and over again during two nights in July. This turned out to be a very productive session because, with 'Sexy Sadie' pretty much in the bag, they next recorded 'Yer Blues'. Accounts vary about the reason why, but it was decided not to play in the studio. Instead, The Beatles performed in room 2A, adjacent to the control room of Studio Two. With dimensions of 8 by 15.5 feet, it had once housed Telefunken four-track machines before they were moved into the control room, then used as a storage area. Although 2A had recently been emptied, once the group had set up their equipment, there was not a lot of space to move. 'If one of them turned and swung his guitar, he'd hit someone else in the head it was so tight,' Ken Scott recalls. It was rather like being crammed together on the stage of the Cavern Club in Liverpool, as seen in the Granada TV film of The Beatles performing 'Some Other Guy' in 1962. Indeed, that was the experience the group were aiming to recreate when recording 'Yer Blues'.

'People that heard us in Liverpool and Hamburg, and on the early dates before we turned into just a mass scream, that's how we played – heavy rock,' John commented in 1968. 'But when it was put down on the early records, there was never enough bass in it, the guitar solo never came through, because we didn't know about recording then. We sounded more like us on this record [*The Beatles*]. We rid ourselves of the self-consciousness bit, so we were doing what we were doing earlier on, but with a better knowledge of the technique of recording. Quite a few of the tracks are just straight takes of us playing.'

'Yer Blues' is just that: the classic line-up of Ringo on drums on track one; Paul on bass on two: and John and George on guitars recorded to tracks three and four. John sang an impassioned guide vocal that was not recorded, although it was picked up faintly by other microphones in 2A. Paul sang with him on certain parts such as 'Girl, you know the reason why'. Take five on **CD Five – Sessions Track 7** is the performance before the one used to create the master. John plays a solo for one chorus, followed by George, then they both take solos again in the same order.

They carried on well past take six. After take ten, John said, 'All right, we'll do one more. You can have one of the other ones, I just want to get into the song.' Amps were turned up loud in a confined space. 'Too loud for you? Can't *you* get louder?' John suggested at the end of take 11. Eventually, they wound back to take six which, in a reduction mix with the two guitars combined on track three, became take 16. The beginning of take six was copied across again and, by the unusual move of cutting the four-track tape, was edited onto the song at 3'17" for an instrumental section to fade out. 'Intro on end' was how a note on the tape box described the 'Edit Piece'. John's off-mic guide vocal creates an eerie effect as the track recedes into the distance.

Work continued the following evening with John and occasionally Paul singing on track four, with an added snare drum from 2'25" – the point from which there were no further vocals. The 'wobbled' guitars were 'dropped in' over the original solos on track three. 'Yer Blues' is one of Ringo's favourites on 'The White Album': 'You can't top it. It was really because the four of us were in a box with no separation. It was this group that was together. It was like grunge rock of the Sixties, really – grunge blues.'

Mother Nature's Son

09.08.1968

Part of The Beatles' regime in the ashram in India was attendance at lectures by the Maharishi. One of his talks concerning the unity of man and nature inspired both John and Paul to write songs. John's 'Child Of Nature', written in Rishikesh, was included in the selection of demos for the album compiled in Esher, but was never recorded at Abbey Road. After John had set new words to the tune, 'Jealous Guy', first released on his 1971 album *Imagine*, became one of his most popular solo songs. Paul took a more universal approach to the lecture's subject. Paul's notebook entitled 'Spring Songs Rishikesh 1968' includes two verses. The final verse ('Find me in my field of grass…') was written when he returned from India: 'I remember writing "Mother Nature's Son" at my dad's house in Liverpool. I often used to do that, when I'd gone up to see him. I'd feel in a good mood visiting my family, so it was often a good occasion to write songs. So this was me doing my mother nature's son bit. I've always loved the song called "Nature Boy" [a ballad exquisitely sung by Nat 'King' Cole]. "Mother Nature's Son" was inspired by that.'

Although Paul's childhood was spent in Liverpool, he points out that 'I was always able to take my bike and within five minutes I'd be in quite deep countryside. I remember the Dam Woods, which had millions of rhododendron bushes. I've never seen that many rhododendron bushes since. This is where my love of the country came from. This is what I was writing about in "Mother Nature's Son". It was basically a heartfelt song about my child-of-nature leanings.'

Written in D, the musical structure of the song revolves around moving the D chord shape up the neck of the guitar. The tune swoops and soars like a lark ascending. The refrain has no words; instead, Paul seems to be impersonating various instruments in a similar style to the vocal acrobatics of Harry Nilsson on his album *Pandemonium Shadow Show* – particularly the song '1941'. During an interview with Kenny Everett in June 1968 at Abbey Road, it became clear that the

MONO/~~STEREO~~ - 4 TRACK

RECORDING SHEET + MONO REDUCTION

Sheet: 1 of: 1 Class: POP Overall Title: SUPERIMPOSITION + 4 TRACK → 4 TRACK Date of Session: 20 AUGUST. 1968 Job No: 1069

ARTISTIC INFORMATION

ARTISTE(S) AND/OR CAST	THE BEATLES
CONDUCTOR	
ORCHESTRA	
ACCOMPANIMENT	
ART. DEPT. REP.	MR G. MARTIN.

COSTING INFORMATION

MATERIALS USED	1×8¼ (4 TRACK) 1×8¼ (¼") 1×5" (PLASTIC SPOOL)	ORDER NUMBER	
SESSION BOOKED TIME	8-12	COMPANY	
SESSION ACTUAL	8-4.00	STUDIO/CONTROL ROOM	2-2
SET-UP/PLAYBACK	½	ENGINEERS	KS-JS

TITLES and MATRIX Nos.	AUTHOR/COMPOSER/ PUBLISHER	REEL NUMBERS	FALSE STARTS	TAKE No.	TAKE DETAILS FROM	TO	DUR.	M	REMARKS
MOTHER NATURES SON		E69834 (CONT)		24	COMPLETE.		2.35	BEST	
DEMO				1	—	〃 —		BEST *	
*CUT OUT AND TAKEN AWAY ON A 5" PLASTIC SPOOL BY MR C. THOMAS. C. Thomas									
MOTHER NATURE'S SON		E69960 (4 TRACK)		26	COMPLETE		2.35	BEST	
~~BEST~~ WILD HONEY PIE				1	—	〃 —	.59	BEST.	
MOTHER NATURE'S SON		E69961 (¼")		RM1	—	〃 —	2.47		
			2	3	—	〃 —	2.47		
			4-5	6	—	〃 —	2.47		
			7	8	—	〃 —	2.47	BEST	
WILD HONEY PIE.			RM1-4	5	—	〃 —	.55		
				6	—	〃 —	.55	BEST.	

Ref. 9864

MONO/STEREO

RECORDING SHEET

Sheet: 1 of: 1 Class: POP. Overall Title: STEREO + MONO REDUCTIONS Date of Session: 2 OCTOBER 1968 Job No: 1069

ARTISTIC INFORMATION

ARTISTE(S) AND/OR CAST	THE BEATLES
CONDUCTOR	
ORCHESTRA	
ACCOMPANIMENT	
ART. DEPT. REP.	MR G. MARTIN.

COSTING INFORMATION

MATERIALS USED	3×8¼ (¼")	ORDER NUMBER	
SESSION BOOKED TIME	7-12	COMPANY	
SESSION ACTUAL	7-5.45	STUDIO/CONTROL ROOM	2-2
SET-UP/PLAYBACK	½	ENGINEERS	KS-JJ

TITLES and MATRIX Nos.	AUTHOR/COMPOSER/ PUBLISHER	REEL NUMBERS	FALSE STARTS	TAKE No.	TAKE DETAILS FROM	TO	DUR.	M	REMARKS
EVERYBODYS GOT SOMETHING TO HIDE EXCEPT FOR ME AND MY MONKEY		E70504Z (¼")		RS1	COMPLETE		2.25	BEST	
		E70331 (¼")		RM1	—	〃 —	2.24	BEST	
HELTER SKELTER		E70504Z (CONT)		RS1	—	〃 —	3.32		
				RS2	—	〃 —	3.35		
			RS3	RS4	—	〃 —	3.38		
				RS5	—	〃 —	3.32	BEST.	
MOTHER NATURES SON		E70504Z (CONT)		RS1	—	〃 —	2.44		
				RS2	—	〃 —	2.44	BEST	
MOTHER NATURES SON.		E70331 (CONT)		RM1	—	〃 —	2.44		
				RM2	—	〃 —	2.44	BEST	
OB LA DI – OB LA DA		E70504Z (CONT)		RS1	—	〃 —	3.10		
			RS2	RS3	—	〃 —	3.10		
		E70315Z (¼")		~~RS4~~	—	〃 —	3.10	BEST	
OB-LA-DI - OB-LA-DA.		E70331 (CONT)		RM10	—	〃 —	3.10	BEST.	
LONG LONG LONG.				RM1	—	〃 —	3.06	BEST	

Ref. 9864

singer's recently released LP was a particular favourite of all The Beatles. Opting for a string arrangement, rather than the small brass ensemble heard on the original, Nilsson recorded a sensitive version of 'Mother Nature's Son' for his album *Harry*, released in 1969.

Recording details:
Recorded: 9 and 20 August 1968 – Studio Two, Abbey Road
Mono Mix: 12 October 1968 – *Stereo Mix:* 12 October 1968

Paul: lead vocal, guitars, bass drum, percussion :

Additional Instruments:
Two trumpets, two trombones – *Recorded:* 20 August 1968 – Studio Two, Abbey Road

Paul's Esher demo versions of 'Blackbird' and 'Mother Nature's Son' were acoustic blueprints that he followed closely when recording them at Abbey Road. During rehearsals for 'Blackbird' on 11 June, John and George Martin discussed arrangement ideas with Paul. John suggested 'a very nice bit of brass band – Nilsson's brass band.' *Pandemonium Shadow Show* included 'She's Leaving Home', but instead of having a string accompaniment, as heard on The Beatles' *Sgt. Pepper* version, there is a small brass section on Nilsson's record. Paul quickly switched to playing 'Mother Nature's Son', remarking '*that* would be nice with a brass band … like four … cornet, euphonum… little.' Sure enough, when recording 'Mother Nature's Son' two months later, a George Martin score for a 'little' brass ensemble – two trumpets and two trombones – was 'a very nice bit'. But that would be added later.

The first stage was to record a live performance of Paul singing and playing acoustic guitar. His vocal was recorded on track four and guitar was sent to track one of the four-track tape. *Anthology 3* includes take two, the first complete recording of the evening. The mood of the session was mellow. When take three broke down after 'sitting singing songs for everyone,' Paul sang, 'and this is one of them!' **CD Five – Sessions Track 6** is take 15, where Paul tries out different, often jazzy, vocal inflections. Just as in the 'Blackbird' session, he recorded take after take and was keen to hear the thoughts of those listening in the control room: 'What's been happening so far, Mr Martin?' he enquired. At the end of the final performance, take 25, he was unsure which of his last two takes he preferred. 'I'll listen to 'em both or I'll listen to one. Somewhere in there, there's something!'

Eleven days later, the brass arrangement was recorded onto tracks two and three of take 24, with the musicians hearing Paul's performance over a loudspeaker as they played along. The four tracks of take 24 were then bounced down to another tape and named take 26. The two tracks containing brass were combined on track three. Several other ingredients – all by Paul – were stirred into the mix, including double-tracking some of the original vocal and adding a guitar counterpoint towards the end of the song. The percussive elements were unusual. While listening in the control room, Paul tapped out a rhythm on a book. He liked the sound so much that engineer Ken Scott found himself positioning a microphone over a book. 'They never taught you how to get the best sound out of a book at EMI,' Ken jokes. 'But I carefully miked it as best I could.' The sound produced is similar to the foot-tapping heard on 'Blackbird'.

For the latter half of 'Mother Nature's Son', a bass drum was recorded outside the studio in a stairwell. With a microphone positioned two floors above the drum, a large part of the sound came from the beats reverberating around the concrete walls. A few months later, a similar idea was used by Simon and Garfunkel for 'The Boxer'. The 'lie-la-lie' choruses are punctuated by explosive snare drum hits recorded in a hallway next to an open elevator shaft. In 1968, such experimentation was the name of the game for creative rivals in the music business. 'These were the kinds of things that we were always trying,' Ken Scott recalls. 'Sometimes they worked and sometimes they didn't.'

With 'Mother Nature's Son' completed, Paul quickly recorded two more songs: 'Wild Honey Pie', which made it onto the record, and one simply described as 'Demo'. The latter is thought to be an unreleased McCartney composition called 'Etcetera'. It remains unheard, because Paul took home the only existing tape of it.

Everybody's Got Something To Hide Except Me And My Monkey 26.06.1968

John explained that his composition evolved from the unusual title: 'That was just a nice line that I made into a song. It was about me and Yoko. Everybody seemed to be paranoid except for us two, who were in the glow of love.' John first met Yoko on 9 November 1966 when he visited the Indica Gallery in London for a preview of her exhibition *Unfinished Paintings and Objects*. 'I see this thing called "Hammer A Nail In" and it's a board with a chain and a hammer hanging on it, and a bunch of nails at the bottom. I said, "Well, can I hammer a nail in?" She said, "You can hammer one in for five shillings." I said, "I'll give you an imaginary five shillings and hammer an imaginary nail in. All right?" And that's when we fell. But it was 18 months before we really got together.' John was thrilled to have found a woman with whom he could communicate in a manner he had believed was only possible with a male friend. Describing Yoko in a 1969 BBC interview, he declared, 'She's me in drag!'

The song was recorded a week after the opening of *In His Own Write*, the National Theatre's dramatisation of John's books. When Yoko attended the event at the Old Vic Theatre on 18 June 1968, speculation followed in the press about the state of John's marriage to Cynthia. It presaged the media's frequent hostility towards John and his new partner. Nevertheless, 'Everybody's Got Something To Hide Except Me And My Monkey' is a joyous celebration of the couple's relationship. John was also delighted that Fats Domino, one of his rock 'n' roll heroes, made a rollicking cover version in 1969.

George recalled the song's title was a modification of an aphorism coined by the Maharishi – 'apart from that bit about the monkey'.

Recording details:
Recorded: 26, 27 June, 1 and 23 July 1968 – Studio Two, Abbey Road
Mono Mix: 12 October 1968 – *Stereo Mix:* 12 October 1968

John: lead vocal, guitar :
Paul: bass, hand bell, maracas, backing vocal :
George: guitar, backing vocal :
Ringo: drums :

The Esher demo recording featured two acoustic guitars, percussion and double-tracked vocals by John. During two days in the studio to record the instrumental backing track, the group's arrangement turned into something that was more frenzied and raucous than the feel of the demo.

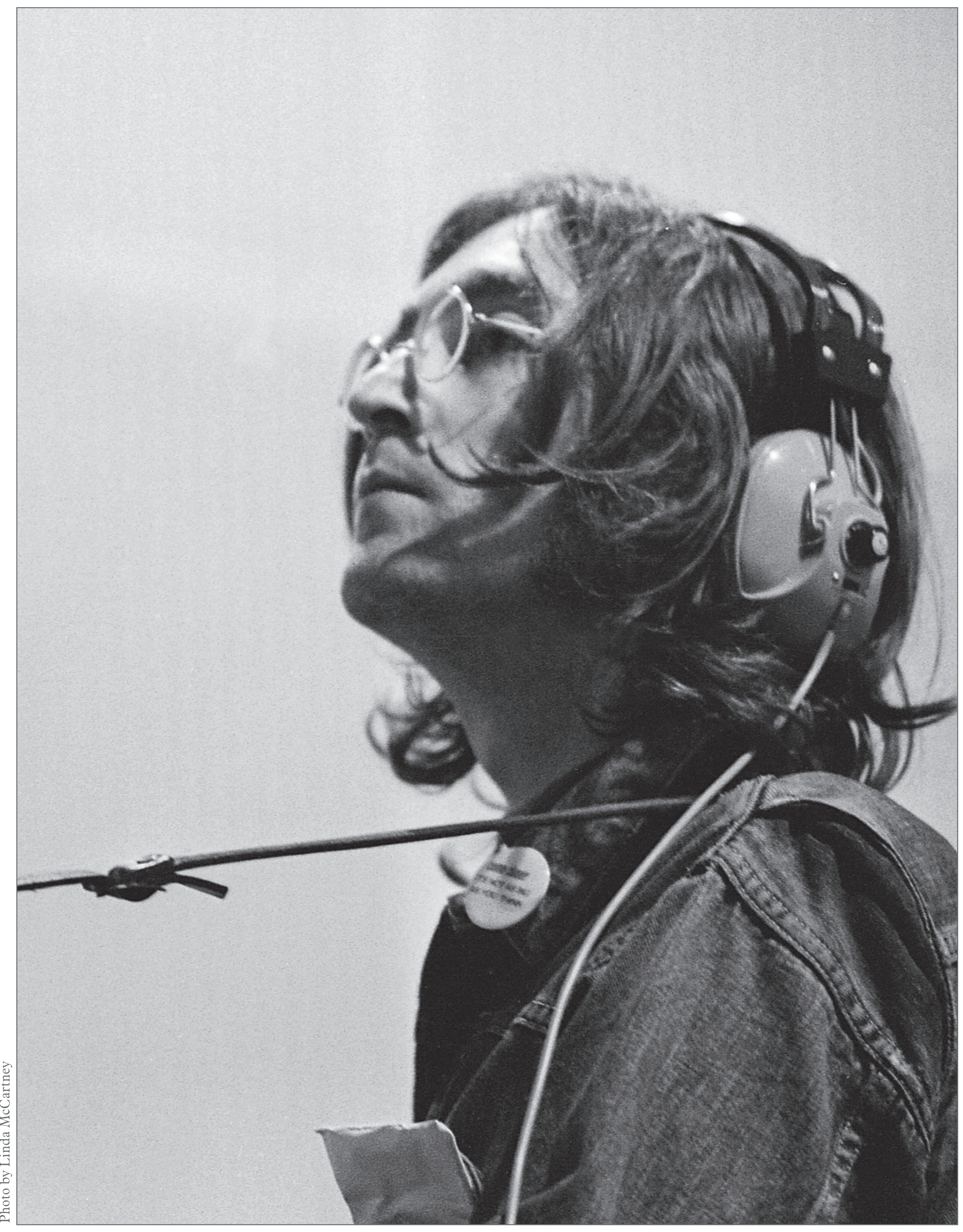


Photo by Linda McCartney

While The Beatles rehearsed on 26 June 1968, a four-track tape was left running. Electric guitars by John and George were recorded on tracks one and two, Paul's bass was on track three and drums on track four. This tape was reused to record the following day's session but, fortunately, part of the rehearsal survived on the last three minutes of the reel. As can be heard on CD Four – Sessions Track 4, this recently discovered, previously thought erased, performance reveals a stage of evolution between the demo and the frenetic atmosphere of the final version.

In the second session, the guitars were recorded to tracks one and two, while Ringo's drums were on track three. The drum track also featured Paul fiercely shaking a hand bell and maracas at different points during the song. His whoops and hollers were also picked up during these takes to perfect the instrumental backing. The recording notes identified take eight as the best, onto which Paul's bass part was recorded on track four during the next session for the song on 1 July. A reduction mix created take nine from take eight with the guitars combined on track one and bass, drums and hand bell mixed to track two. Two vocals were added on the remaining tracks with overdubbed drums also present on track three. The studio session sheets marked take ten as 'best', which lasted 2'18". Take 11 ran longer (3'06") because another reduction mix was made of take eight, which was lengthened by copying a section that was then edited onto the end. On 23 July, a reduction mix of take ten became take 12 with two vocals and overdubbed drums now all on track four. A new lead vocal by John was added to track three.

All the session tapes for 'Everybody's Got Something To Hide Except Me And My Monkey' contain extremely energetic and committed performances. Constantly encouraging his bandmates with wild hand bell playing and enthusiastic shouts, at the end of one of the takes Paul joked, 'Don't stop me now!'

Sexy Sadie

19.07.1968

'It was the last piece I wrote before I left India,' John recalled. 'I wrote it when we had our bags packed and were leaving.' On 14 May 1968, during a New York press conference announcing the foundation of Apple Corps, John stated: 'I think Maharishi was a mistake, but the teachings have got some truth in them.' Yet when the double album was released, it was not widely recognised that John was addressing Maharishi Mahesh Yogi. More listeners would have imagined the subject of 'Sexy Sadie' to be a femme fatale or 'the vamp' that film star Mae West played so well in the 1930s and 1940s. The backing singing, redolent of the vocal arrangement of an old-time popular song, seems to encourage that idea. Along those lines, the Esher Demo includes some jokey, lovesick 'Oh, Sadie's uttered by John. The song itself has a similar mood to 'I've Been Good To You', a Tamla record by The Miracles, that all The Beatles loved. 'Look what you've done,' Smokey Robinson sings. 'You've made a fool out of someone…'

It was John's interview printed in *Rolling Stone* magazine in January 1971 that first uncovered his disguised barb: 'I wouldn't write "Maharishi, what have you done, you made a fool of everyone", but now it can be told, fab listeners.' Over the decades, there have been many differing accounts about what happened in Rishikesh to make John write such an accusatory song. After spending what seems to have been a peaceful time away from the pressures and temptations of his life back home, John's anger and disillusionment with the guru was sparked by unsubstantiated talk of the Maharishi making a sexual advance towards one of the women students at the ashram.

Paul and Ringo had already left India by this time, but George was still there with John. 'Someone started the nasty rumour about Maharishi, a rumour that swept the media for years,' George remembered in *The Beatles Anthology*. 'This whole piece of bullshit was invented. There were a lot of flakes there; the whole place was full of flaky people. Some of them were us. The story stirred up a situation. John had wanted to leave anyway, so that forced him into the position of thinking: "OK, now we've got a good reason to get out of here." We went to Maharishi, and I said, "Look, I told you I was going. I'm going to the south of India." He couldn't really accept that we *were* leaving, and he said, "What's wrong?" That's when John said something like, "Well, *you're* supposed to be the mystic, you should know." We took some cars that had been driven up there. We drove for hours. John had a song he had started to write which he was singing: "Maharishi, what have you done?" and I said, "You can't say that, it's ridiculous." I came up with the title of "Sexy Sadie" and John changed Maharishi to Sexy Sadie.'

The author Deepak Chopra has revealed that in 1993 George visited the Maharishi's meditation centre at Vlodrop in the Netherlands, where he apologised for the bad publicity that had followed John's denouncement of the guru. In his *Rolling Stone* interview with Jann Wenner, John acknowledged that 'I was a bit rough on him. I always expect too much. I'm always wanting my mother and don't get her.'

Recording details:
Version One:
Recorded: 19 July 1968 – Studio Two, Abbey Road

Version Two:
Recorded: 24 July 1968 – Studio Two, Abbey Road

John: lead vocal, acoustic guitar :
Paul: bass, piano, organ :
George: electric guitar :
Ringo: drums :

Version Three:
Recorded: 13 and 21 August 1968
Mono Mix: 21 August 1968 – *Stereo Mix:* 14 October 1968

John: lead vocal, backing vocal, electric guitar :
Paul: backing vocal, piano, bass, organ, guitar :
George: backing vocal, guitar, tambourine :
Ringo: drums :

When The Beatles began work on 'Sexy Sadie' at Abbey Road, their early performances were a little slower and more languorous than the demo version played at George's house in late May. At the beginning of the session, drums were recorded on track one; John's acoustic guitar and George's electric guitar were on track two; Paul playing organ was on track three and John's vocal was on track four. As shown by take six on *Anthology 3*, the performances at this stage opened with some jazzy, descending chords played by George. Take nine was extended to just over eight minutes. 'A bit less frantic, everyone,' John advised before that take. 'It seems to be getting heavy.' CD Five – Sessions Track 1 is take 11 featuring Paul alternating between organ and piano. The number of takes reached 21, but The Beatles seemed untroubled by that. 'It's all right to go through all of this,' Paul commented. 'It's getting better all the time!' George sang. 'I'm trying not to think of anything. That's a hard job,' John reflected.

After a weekend away from the studio followed by the orchestral session for 'Good Night' and the final additions to 'Everybody's Got Something To Hide Except Me And My Monkey', the group dedicated another night to 'Sexy Sadie'. Their 'remake' started with 'take 25'.

MONO/~~STEREO~~ 4 TRACK

RECORDING SHEET

Sheet: 1 of: 1 Class: POP. Overall Title: 4 TRACK Date of Session: 13 AUGUST 1968 Job No: 1069

ARTISTIC INFORMATION			COSTING INFORMATION			
ARTISTE(S) AND/OR CAST	THE BEATLES.	CONDUCTOR		MATERIALS USED	4 x 811 (4 TRACK)	ORDER NUMBER	
		ORCHESTRA		SESSION BOOKED TIME	7-12	COMPANY	
		ACCOMPANIMENT		SESSION ACTUAL	7-5.30	STUDIO/CONTROL ROOM	2-2
		ART. DEPT. REP.	Mr G. MARTIN.	SET-UP/PLAYBACK	2	ENGINEERS	KS - JS

TITLES and MATRIX Nos.	AUTHOR/COMPOSER/PUBLISHER	REEL NUMBERS	FALSE STARTS	TAKE No.	TAKE DETAILS FROM	TO	DUR.	M	REMARKS
SEXY SADIE		E68995 (4 TRACK)	100-102	103	COMPLETE.		3.5		
				104	— " —		3.15		
			105	106	— " —		3.04		
				107	— " —		3.59		~~BEST~~
SEXY SADIE		E68996 (4 TRACK)		108	— " —		3.59		
				109	— " —		3.59		
				110	— " —		3.59		
				111	— " —		3.59		BEST.
YER BLUES		E68945 (4 TRACK)		1	— " —		4.10		
				2	— " —		4.47		
			3	4	— " —		4.20		
				5	— " —		3.43		
				6	— " —		3.50		~~BEST~~.
			7	8	— " —		3.55		
		E68946 (4 TRACK)	9-10	11	— " —		4.25		
				12	— " —		4.15		
			13	14	— " —		4.50		
				15	— " —		3.50		
				16	— " —		3.50		BEST ← ↓ → EDITED
				17	EDIT	PIECE	1.00		FOR BEGINNING

MONO/~~STEREO~~

RECORDING SHEET

Sheet: 1 of: Class: POP Overall Title: 4T - MONO. Date of Session: 18-7-68 Job No: 1069

ARTISTIC INFORMATION			COSTING INFORMATION			
ARTISTE(S) AND/OR CAST	THE BEATLES	CONDUCTOR		MATERIALS USED	0 x 811 (1")	ORDER NUMBER	
		ORCHESTRA		SESSION BOOKED TIME	7-12	COMPANY	
		ACCOMPANIMENT		SESSION ACTUAL	10.30-3.30	STUDIO/CONTROL ROOM	2-2
		ART. DEPT. REP.	G.H. MARTIN.	SET-UP/PLAYBACK	1 ¼	ENGINEERS	KS RL

TITLES and MATRIX Nos.	AUTHOR/COMPOSER/PUBLISHER	REEL NUMBERS	FALSE STARTS	TAKE No.	TAKE DETAILS FROM	TO	DUR.	M	REMARKS
HELTER SKELTER.		E69538 4T. contnd.		1	COMPLETE		10.40		TRK. (1) GUIT / DRUMS (BASS)
				2	— " —		12.35		(2)
									(3)
		E69539 4T contnd.		3	— " —		27.11		(4) VOCAL.

George's jazzy introduction remained and Paul had worked out the piano part that endured to the master version. John's live vocal was sung with commitment in every performance and Ringo was steady as a rock throughout the session. Before take 39, John encouraged everyone with a Shakespearean exhortation delivered by Hal in *Henry V*: 'Once more unto the breach!' There is little evidence on tape of tempers becoming frayed during the sessions in 1968, but before take 47 of 'Sexy Sadie' George did snap: 'There's no point in Mr Martin being uptight, right? We're all here to do this. I mean, you're being very negative.' After an unannounced take 48, when their producer suggested they 'could do a better one,' George had calmed down: 'I'm feeling much better now,' he said.

However, by the end of the session, John acknowledged, 'It's killing.' 'Yeah, I know. It's not very good,' Paul conceded. 'It's because we stopped believing in it,' John replied. 'We forgot what it's about.' A swearing version of the chorus offered a strong reminder of John's motivation for writing it, but the song was put aside for three weeks. The 'Re-remake' was begun on 13 August, using the fictional take number 100 for convenience. This time, the tape included Ringo's drums and a tambourine played by George on track one; Paul's piano on track 2 and two tracks of John's electric guitar recorded with microphones placed at different distances from the speaker cabinet. John was not miked, but his guide vocal is occasionally detectable. Driven by Paul's piano part, the performances had more dynamism than in previous sessions. Happy with take 107, John sang a vocal on track four, wiping one of the guitar recordings. A reduction mix was made into take 108 in which electric guitar was combined with piano on track two. Further takes continued until George Martin announced '"Sexy Sadie" – take 112!'

Similarly amused, engineer Ken Scott chuckled as he announced take 113 on 21 August. The final work through two more reduction mixes resulted in the master take 117. This consisted of an overdubbed bass part on track one; drums on track two; a very busy track three containing two electric guitars, piano, backing vocals (ADT-ed when transferred from the previous tape's track three) and a second piano part; and lead vocals, organ and tambourine on track four. During mixing, by editing the closing instrumental section, its duration of 3'55" was reduced to 3'15". The contrast between the simple acoustic demo recorded in May and the released version of 'Sexy Sadie' demonstrates how much a song could change before The Beatles were happy with its final form. The evolution of 'Sexy Sadie' also provides a vivid example of how much hard work and creative input the group would invest to bring a song to fruition.

Helter Skelter

18.07.1968

Two months after the final version of 'Helter Skelter' was recorded, Paul told the Programme Director of Radio Luxembourg, Tony Macarthur, about what had inspired the song's creation: 'That came about just because I'd read a review of a record where it said, "And this group" – it was about some group I don't remember – "this group really goes wild, there's echo on everything, they're screaming their heads off." And I just remember thinking, "Oh, it'd be great to do one like that. Pity they've done it. Must be great – a really screaming record." And then I heard their record and it was quite straight, and it was sort of very sophisticated. It wasn't rough and screaming and tape echo at all. So I thought, "Oh well, we'll do one like that, then." And I had this song called "Helter Skelter" which is just a ridiculous song. So we did it like that, because I like noise.'

In 1987, Paul was more specific: 'I read, in the *NME* I think it was, that Pete Townshend in some interview had said, "We've just done a track with The Who that is the dirtiest, loudest rock 'n' roll track you've ever heard." I never found out what his one was, actually, but it inspired me. I thought we've got to do that.' The record may have been The Who's 'I Can See For Miles', although that single was released in October 1967, some nine months before The Beatles began recording 'Helter Skelter'.

A helter-skelter, as everyone in the UK knows, is a fairground ride in which you speed down a spiral slide while sitting on a mat or sack. When you get to the bottom, you climb back up the steps to the top of the slide to go again. Tragically, Charles Manson's deranged interpretation of 'Helter Skelter', and other songs on 'The White Album', led to his followers committing seven gruesome murders in California. The Los Angeles District Attorney, Vincent Bugliosi, wrote an account of the subsequent trial of Manson called *Helter Skelter*. It featured chilling transcripts from the courtroom proceedings in 1970. 'We both know you ordered those murders,' Bugliosi said to Manson. 'Bugliosi,' came the reply. 'It's The Beatles. The music they're putting out… Why blame it on me? I didn't write the music.'

'Obviously you cannot tell who is going to listen to your stuff and who's going to interpret it,' Paul remarked. 'If someone listens to "Helter Skelter" and says, "Aha. This is a signal." You have no control over that.'

Recorded during the session for 'Helter Skelter' on 9 September 1968:

(You're So Square) Baby, I Don't Care
Before the first take of the remake of 'Helter Skelter', The Beatles warmed up with this Jerry Leiber-Mike Stoller song. It was first recorded in 1957 by Elvis Presley for his third movie *Jailhouse Rock*. Another of the group's rock 'n' roll heroes, Buddy Holly, covered the song for his eponymous solo album released the following year. Buddy's LP also included two other favourites of the group, which they later performed in a studio. 'Words Of Love' was recorded in 1964 for *Beatles For Sale*; 'Mailman, Bring Me No More Blues' was played during their sessions for *Let It Be*, but remained unreleased until its inclusion on *Anthology 3* in 1996.

Recording details:
Version One:
Recorded: 18 July 1968 – Studio Two, Abbey Road

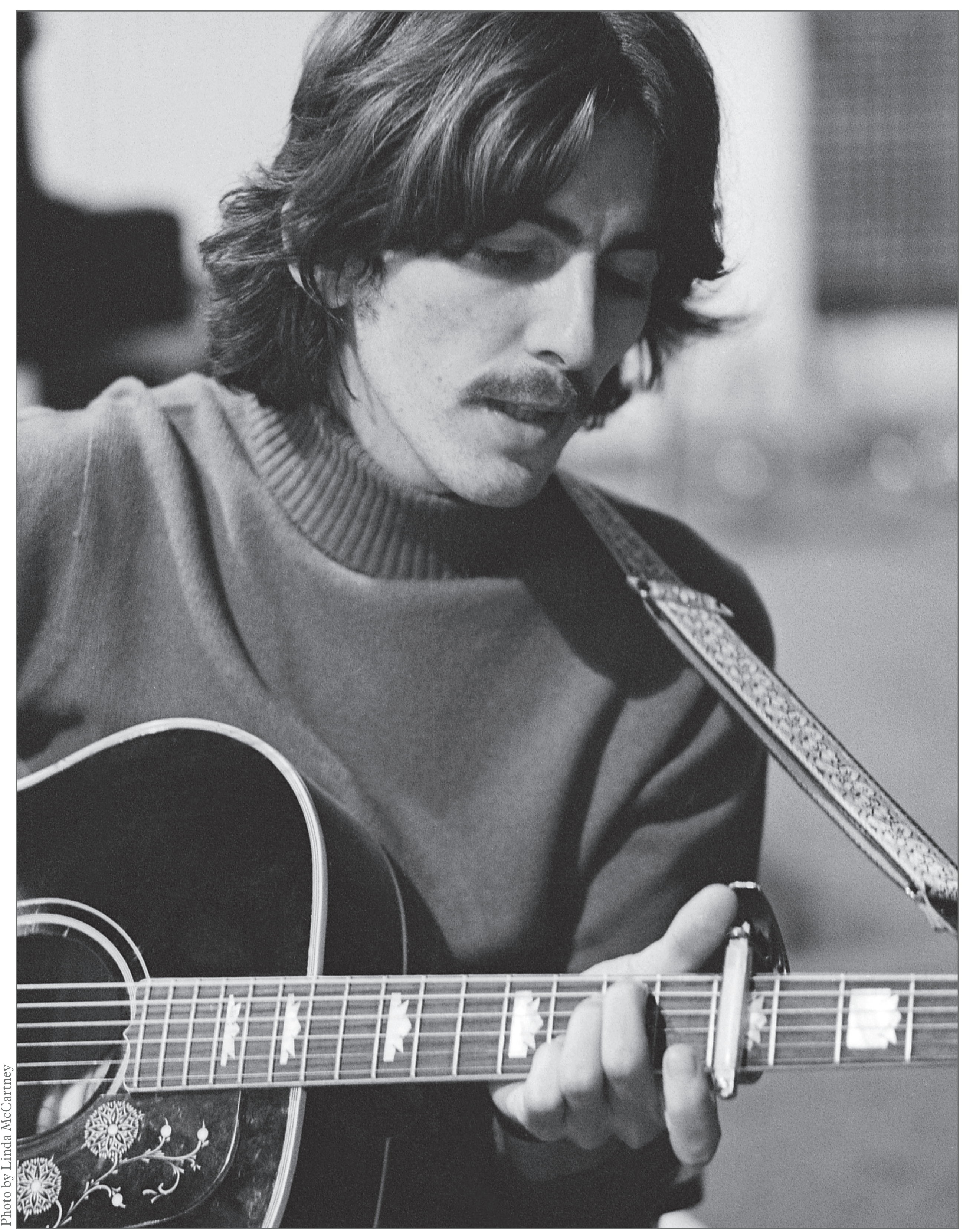
Paul: lead vocal, guitar
John: bass
George: guitar
Ringo: drums

Version Two:
Recorded: 9 and 10 September 1968 – Studio Two, Abbey Road
Mono Mix: 17 September 1968 – *Stereo Mix:* 12 October 1968

Paul: lead vocal, guitar,
John: bass, backing vocal, tenor sax, piano
George: guitar, backing vocal,
Ringo: drums

Additional Instrument:
Mal Evans: trumpet – *Recorded* 9 September 1968

During the 'Blackbird' session on 11 June, a film crew happened to catch a minute of Paul performing 'Helter Skelter' with acoustic guitar. He sang both the words and the descending riffs that are


Photo by Linda McCartney

included in the released version. When The Beatles began recording 'Helter Skelter' in Abbey Road over a month later, they turned it into something much heavier. Three takes were recorded on 18 July, the day after the London premiere and celebratory party for *Yellow Submarine*. Unusually, drums, two electric guitars and bass were all recorded on track one of the tape. Paul's vocal was separated on track four with added tape echo; an effect created by having a second machine recording with its fader open. When the tape reaches the playback head after the audio has been recorded onto it by the record-head, the reproduction of the audio is delayed. How much delay depends on how far apart the heads are and the speed of the tape. In this session, the four-track machine was running at 15 inches-per-second, while the machine for tape-reverb ran at 30 ips. This created a fairly short delay on Paul's voice. The tape delay used at Sun Records in the 1950s, heard on early Elvis Presley records, was usually longer because it came from a tape running at 7.5 ips.

All three takes of 'Helter Skelter' recorded on 18 July have an ominous-sounding intensity – enhanced by the group vamping on an E minor chord rather than the E major harmonies of the released version. The heartbeat bass was played by John on a six-string Fender VI. The first take ran for 10'40". The 12'49" duration of take two, truncated for its first exposure on *Anthology 3* in 1996, is heard in its entirety on **CD Four – Sessions Track 12** – no holds barred. For the final take of the night, The Beatles kept jamming for 27'11". Along the way, Paul sang a verse of one of his earliest songs, 'Just Fun' – 'There's no blue moon that I can see, There's never been in history' – and then quoted the 'woh-oh-oh-oh-oh-oh' hook of 'Ain't Got No Home' by Clarence 'Frogman' Henry and the title of 'Red Sails In The Sunset'.

The reel of tape used for reverb was about to run out so was rewound against the heads prompting one of the guitarists to mimic that sound. When The Beatles returned to the song over seven weeks later, Paul remembered the tape-spooling effect: 'At the end, if it's gone well, do that winding back the tape thing,' he advised the team in the control room. It is this later version of 'Helter Skelter' which seems closest to Paul's desire to make 'the dirtiest, loudest rock 'n' roll track you've ever heard'. Once again, his vocal has tape delay added. Hearing this effect triggered an impromptu performance of the Elvis Presley hit '**(You're So Square) Baby, I Don't Care**' (**CD Five – Sessions Track 14**). 'Hold it, fellas!' Paul joked. He was impersonating Elvis on his record of 'Milkcow Blues Boogie'. 'Let's get real, real gone, for a change,' Elvis had suggested to Scotty Moore and Bill Black. It is a pretty good description of the approach The Beatles took for their remake of 'Helter Skelter'. Ringo recalled it was 'a track we did in total madness and hysterics in the studio.' 'We just tried to get it louder,' Paul recalls. 'Guitars: can we have them sound louder? The drums: louder! That was really all I wanted to do. Make a very loud, raunchy rock 'n' roll record with The Beatles, which it is.'

George Martin had left the country for a holiday, leaving his assistant Chris Thomas to supervise proceedings while he was away. The 21-year-old's first session without his boss present was a baptism of fire – literally: 'George Harrison had set fire to an ashtray and was running around the studio with it above his head, doing an Arthur Brown!' At this time, 'Fire' was a recent UK number one and US number two hit single by The Crazy World Of Arthur Brown. The Mr Brown in question was fond of making flamboyant TV performances, topped off with a flaming headpiece.

'John plays bass which is unusual,' Mal Evans noted in his description of 'Helter Skelter' in ***The Beatles Book Monthly*** edition of November 1968. The recording of the remake began on four-track tape with bass on track one; drums on two; two electric guitars on three and Paul's vocal on four. Acknowledging the previous takes in July, the September session sheet began with take four. By take 12, rudimentary trumpet was on the same track as Paul's vocal. **CD Five – Sessions Track 15** is take 17, recorded on an eight-track tape. Although take 17 was ordered to be kept and marked 'Fab', the master take is 21. Amongst the sounds caught in the maelstrom are a squeaking sax with tape reverb played by John, backing vocals singing 'Fanny Craddock' (in 1968, she was the host of just about the only cookery programme on TV) and, at the very end of the stereo version, the desperate shout from Ringo, 'I've got blisters on my fingers!' picked up by the drum microphones on track two of the tape.

The mono mix done on 10 September fades out by 3'39". In the stereo mix, the music returns for a further 50 seconds of disarray.

Long, Long, Long

07.10.1968

The cacophony of 'Helter Skelter' is followed by the gentle reverie of side three's closing track. It is a peaceful response to its manic predecessor. 'The "you" in "Long, Long, Long" is God,' George revealed in his book *I Me Mine*. This was the first of George's released songs that, while appearing to be about romantic desire, could also be interpreted in another way. Two years after recording 'Long, Long, Long', George unashamedly addressed God in the most popular track of his solo career, 'My Sweet Lord'. Nevertheless, many of his songs have a concealed dual meaning. 'If you say the word God or Lord, it makes some people's hair curl!' he explained. 'They feel threatened when you talk about something that isn't just "Be-Bop-A-Lula" and if you say something that is not just trivia then their only way out of that is to say, "You're lecturing us or you're preaching", which it isn't. They just can't come to terms with the idea that there may just be something else going on apart from their individual egos.'

George has acknowledged that part of the musical inspiration for 'Long, Long, Long' came from a sequence of chords used in 'Sad Eyed Lady Of The Lowlands', the majestic song that filled the final side of Bob Dylan's 1966 double LP *Blonde On Blonde*. The similarity is only slight; the musical parallel between the two is more to do with the hypnotic mood both recordings create. A surviving draft of 'Long, Long, Long', handwritten over the spaces of a diary page for Sunday 11 to Wednesday 14 August 1968, indicates that it is likely to have been composed while the sessions for *The Beatles* were in progress. Not included in the collection of Esher demos from May, George's prayer-like ballad was recorded during the final week of work on 'The White Album'.

Recording details:
Recorded: 7, 8 and 9 October 1968 – Studio Two, Abbey Road
Mono Mix: 14 October 1968 – *Stereo Mix:* 10 October 1968
————————

George: lead vocal, acoustic guitars :
Paul: backing vocal, organ, bass :
Ringo: drums :

Additional Instrument:
Chris Thomas: piano – *Recorded:* 9 October 1968

With only a few days to go before the album had to be finished, George introduced this fairly recent composition. Just before starting the 67th take of a session that had started around 16 hours beforehand, George said, 'Let this be the one!' Paul replied, 'I suppose it's been

EMITAPE

MR. G. MARTIN. 1064.

Tape No. E70550-8TRACK. Identity THE BEATLES.

	Subject		START	FINISH		Remarks
	~~[illegible]~~ LONG-LONG LONG	1 2	FS 4.14	B/D.		SI TR-3 GTR TR-2 DRUMS TR-1 ORGAN TR-4 VOCAL.
		1 2 3&4	– B/D. – -COMPLETE – FS –			— 2.46. — SI TR-5 – VOCAL & GTR. SI TR-6 BASS GTR. TK 7 PIANO
		~~4~~ 5	~~[illegible]~~ -COMPLETE		?	2.49. TK8 HARMONIES
		6 7 8-9	– FS – – B/D – – FS –			2.02. —
		10&11	– FS –			—
	UN	12 13		B/D B/D	GOOD.	2.35 1.02. ADLIB START.
	NOTE 1st few takes wiped [illegible] AT START	14-17 63&64 65 66 67	– FS – – FS – -COMPLETE- "		BEST.	— — 2.30 2.25 2.56.

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2249

TAPE LENGTH - TYPE		ENGINEER	TAPE SPEED
2400 ft - 811	No 2-2 MACH No 3M3 1	KMS - MWS DATE 7th October 68	15"/sec.

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a long, long, long time.' Take 67 was finally the one George, Paul and Ringo were happy with. John was not present. While making many attempts to settle on the best performance for overdubs, the patience and perseverance of George's two allies did not waver. 'I don't mind how long it takes at the moment. That intro was great,' Paul said after take 29. After take 48, George observed, 'The one before that, I really felt that one was it.' 'Now, now, don't be defeatist,' Paul answered. Before take 53, George announced, 'If we don't get this one then fuck it. Use the one before.' They carried on. After take 63, George commented, 'Come on, lads. Any of those will do me. Any of them.' They kept going.

Organ was recorded on track one; drums on two; acoustic guitar played by George on three; and his lead vocal was on four. The session tapes convey the session's relaxed and happy mood. The scent of joss sticks was also infusing the atmosphere in Studio Two. 'Where did Mal get those joss sticks?' George asked. 'They're very Rishikesh joss sticks.' At the end of take 65, Paul hit a low note on the organ, which made a wine bottle on top of the instrument's Leslie speaker rattle. Always keen to seize upon unexpected sounds, they made sure this would happen again on the two remaining takes. Ringo accompanied the ominous rattling sound with a fast roll on the snare drum. In fact, his dramatic drumming throughout each take was an essential component of the arrangement. For example, the performances improved after it was decided that, from take 57 onwards, drums should be heard earlier than the middle section of the song.

George had been keen for his song to feature organ. After take 15, Paul commented, 'I tell you what, do you think I should be in all the time on the organ?' 'I don't mind,' George responded. Listening to Paul developing the integral organ part, George joked after take 21, 'Music From Big 'Ead!' *Music From Big Pink* by The Band, released three months previously, had turned many heads with its style of songwriting and instrumentation. A key part of The Band's sound was some very tasteful Lowrey organ playing by Garth Hudson.

The following day, at the beginning of a session in which 'I'm So Tired' and 'The Continuing Story Of Bungalow Bill' were completed, George and Paul overdubbed some parts on the eight-track tape of 'Long, Long, Long'. George double-tracked his vocal while adding another guitar part on track five; Paul played bass on six; and the two of them added harmonies on track eight. The final element was added on 9 October when Chris Thomas played piano during the middle section. He recalled that 'They said "Make it like The Moody Blues".' Sure enough, his playing is reminiscent of Mike Pinder's piano solo on 'Go Now!' by The Moody Blues, released in 1964.

CD Six – Sessions Track 13 is take 44. When it breaks down, George sings a part of his unpublished song 'Gathering Gesturing' – an exercise in alliterative word play. His remark, 'Righto, lads, sock it to me one more time' was a jokey reference to a ubiquitous phrase in 1968. The TV show *Rowan and Martin's Laugh-in* parodied the idea of it by including a 'Sock it to me time' skit each week.

MONO/~~STEREO~~

RECORDING SHEET

Sheet : .... of : .... Class : POP. Overall Title ....

Date of Session 4/6/68. Job No : 1069.

ARTISTIC INFORMATION

ARTISTE(S) AND/OR CAST	THE BEATLES.
CONDUCTOR	
ORCHESTRA	
ACCOMPANIMENT	
ART. DEPT. REP.	MR. G. H. MARTIN.

COSTING INFORMATION

MATERIALS USED	1 x 811 ½" / 1 x 811 ¼"	ORDER NUMBER	
SESSION BOOKED TIME	2:30 – 12 50.	COMPANY	
SESSION ACTUAL	2:30 – 1:00.	STUDIO/CONTROL ROOM	
SET-UP/PLAYBACK	½.	ENGINEERS	PB AMc.

TITLES and MATRIX Nos.	AUTHOR/COMPOSER/PUBLISHER	REEL NUMBERS	FALSE STARTS	TAKE No.	TAKE DETAILS FROM	TAKE DETAILS TO	DUR.	M	REMARKS
REVOLUTION.		E 68892. 4T.	SI	1	COMPLETE.		BEST.		TR. 3 VOCALS.
		— " —	— "	"	— " —		— " —		TR 4 VOCALS.
TAPE LOOPS MADE ON		E 68892 (4T)		1	COMPLETE		BEST		
				2	— " —		BEST.		
REVOLUTION. 4T – 4T. OF T 19 ON E 68892									
		E. 68893		20	COMPLETE.		BEST.		
			SI	1	— " —		BEST.		TR 2 DRUMS-GUITAR ORGAN.
			— "	—	— " —		— " —		TR 3 VOCAL BACKING.

MONO REMIX (ROUGH.) FLANGED TR 2 & 3.
TWO TAPE LOOPS

REMIX TAKEN AWAY.
ALSO COPY MADE AND. TAKEN AWAY.

2 x 7" PLASTIC SPOOLS USED.

Ref. 9864

MONO/~~STEREO~~ 4T

RECORDING SHEET

Sheet : 1 of : .... Class : POP Overall Title 4T-4T.

Date of Session 10-8-68 Job No : 1069

ARTISTIC INFORMATION

ARTISTE(S) AND/OR CAST	THE BEATLES
CONDUCTOR	
ORCHESTRA	
ACCOMPANIMENT	
ART. DEPT. REP.	G. H. MARTIN.

1 x 5" spool **COSTING INFORMATION**

MATERIALS USED	0 x 811 (1")	ORDER NUMBER	
SESSION BOOKED TIME	7 – 12	COMPANY	PARLO
SESSION ACTUAL	7 – 130	STUDIO/CONTROL ROOM	3-3
SET-UP/PLAYBACK		ENGINEERS	GE RL

TITLES and MATRIX Nos.	AUTHOR/COMPOSER/PUBLISHER	REEL NUMBERS	FALSE STARTS	TAKE No.	TAKE DETAILS FROM	TAKE DETAILS TO	DUR.	M	REMARKS
REVOLUTION (REMAKE)		E69176 4T control	4	1					1 GUIT
				2					2 GUIT
				3					3 DRUMS (1)
			6 7 8	5					4. DRUMS (2)
				9					
				10	COMPLETE		3:22	~~Best~~.	
— " —		E69205 4T. control		11	— " —		3:22		4T-4T OF TK 10
				12	— " —		3:22		
				13	— " —		3:22	Best.	+SI VOCAL ON TRK 3,4
— " —		E69176 4T control		14	— " —		3:22		4T – 4T OF TK 13
				15	— " —		3:22		BEST TO BE DECIDED

MONO COPY OF THIS GIVEN
TO J. LENNON.

Revolution 1 & Revolution 30.05.1968

On 6 June 1968, one week into 'The White Album' sessions, John was interviewed for the BBC Two TV show *Release*. He and actor Victor Spinetti mainly talked about *In His Own Write*, the dramatisation of John's two books staged by the National Theatre. However, during the interview, John looked directly at the camera and pronounced, 'I think our society is run by insane people for insane objectives. If anybody can put on paper what our government, and the American government, and the Russian, Chinese… what they are actually trying to do, and what they think they're doing, I'd be very pleased to know.' In other words, as he sang in 'Revolution', 'We'd all love to see the plan.'

At the beginning of the year, the most intensive and bloody battles of the Vietnam War had followed the Tet Offensive launched by the North Vietnamese. In March, there were clashes between police and anti-war protestors outside the US London Embassy in Grosvenor Square. By the time of the first recording of 'Revolution' in Esher in May 1968, there had been violent street battles between students and police in France and unrest across college campuses in the UK and the USA. There had also been war, street riots and revolution in the air during 1967, to which The Beatles responded with their hopeful anthem for the world, 'All You Need Is Love'. By 1968, John was committed to having the group more directly express its view about what was going on. 'I wanted to put out what I felt about revolution. I thought it was about time we spoke about it, the same as I thought it was about time we stopped not answering about the Vietnam War when we were on tour [in 1966]. I wanted to say my piece about revolutions. I wanted to communicate. "This is what I say. What do you say?" I had been thinking about it up in the hills in India. I still had this "God will save us" feeling about it. That it's gonna be all right.'

When the Esher demo for 'Revolution' was recorded, John did not sing the final verse beginning, 'You say you'll change the constitution…' An early typed lyric sheet for the song shows this verse was added in John's handwriting. In a 1972 interview, he confessed that 'I should never have put that in about Chairman Mao. I was just finishing it off in the studio when I did that.' During 1968, he was ambivalent about one of the song's most significant statements. In the first version – 'Revolution 1' – recorded in June, he sang, 'When you talk about destruction, don't you know that you can count me out… in.' For the demo and a faster version released in August, before the album became available, there is no equivocation. He would definitely be counted out. Yet when a promotional film was made in September for that faster version released on the B-side of 'Hey Jude', John returned to 'out… in'.

Jon Wiener, author of a study of John's politics called *Come Together: John Lennon in His Time*, was an activist in 1968. 'It was a revolutionary year. We had students nearly overthrowing the government in Paris, we had building seizures on college campuses across the US, but there was a lot of debate and uncertainty about what kind of revolution ought to come into existence. Lennon's view was that it ought to be a revolution of *personal* liberation rather than political liberation. "You say you want a revolution? You'd better free your mind instead." He was engaging in a debate with political militants. I was one of them and we were very unhappy with his statement.' 'The only way to ensure a lasting peace of any kind is to change people's minds,' John stated in 1969, when he and Yoko had embarked on their events for peace. 'There's no other way. The Government can do it with propaganda; Coca-Cola can do it with propaganda. Why can't we? We are the hip generation.'

Recording details:
Revolution 1
Recorded: 30 May – Studio Two, Abbey Road;
31 May, 4 June 1968 – Studio Three, Abbey Road;
21 June 1968 – Studio Two, Abbey Road
Mono Mix: Fold down from master stereo mix –
Stereo Mix: 25 June 1968

John: lead vocal, backing vocal, guitars, Mellotron :
Paul: backing vocal, piano, organ, bass :
George: backing vocal, guitar :
Ringo: drums, percussion :

Yoko Ono: voice on tape, electronic sound effects :

Additional Instruments:
Two trumpets, four trombones – *Recorded:* 21 June 1968 – Studio Two, Abbey Road

'The White Album' sessions began on Thursday 30 May 1968 with work on John's song 'Revolution'. The first stage of its development was recording, onto track one of a four-track tape, John playing acoustic guitar, Paul on piano and Ringo drumming. Before take 13, Paul led an improvisation about what was happening in France on this day – 'Civil war is raging in France, the generals cannot cope.' There had been recent unrest sparked by student demonstrations and strikes by millions of workers. The previous day, President Charles de Gaulle had flown to West Germany to meet the chief of the French armed forces in that country, General Jacques Massu. He was persuaded to return to France by Massu. During the afternoon of 30 May 1968, around 400,000 protestors marched through the streets of Paris demanding his resignation with shouts of 'Adieu, de Gaulle!'

By take 14 of 'Revolution', unusual sounds were being picked up by the guitar microphone. Engineer Geoff Emerick and producer George Martin wondered what the source was. 'It was a tape recorder,' John explained from the studio. 'Yoko's playing the tape.' These various extracts had previously been recorded by Yoko. It was decided that take 18 of the guitar/piano/drums rhythm track on track one should be used as the foundation for further layering of voices and instruments. This take was the first time the words 'Can I take two?' were heard over the opening guitar.

On the remaining three tracks of the tape used this day are two vocals by John and a bass. Towards the end of the performance, a Mellotron using the flute setting is heard on track three and various electronic squeaks were recorded on track two. Paul singing the chorus of 'Love Me Do' is in there too. It was an extraordinary vocal performance by John. Some of it – various screams and 'Right, right, right, riiiiiight!' – were used in 'Revolution 9'; as were extracts from Yoko's tape machine such as 'Maybe if you become naked'. Three minutes from the end, John said, 'OK, I've had enough,' but nobody stopped. A mix of this take is on **CD Four – Sessions Track 1**.

The next day, take 18 was bounced to another four-track tape with guitar, piano, drums and bass mixed to track one and two vocal tracks combined on track four. John decided to sing while lying on the floor. John, Paul and George then sang 'shoo-be-doo-wop' backing vocals that were recorded on tracks two and three. On the third day of recording, extra drums and Paul playing organ were added and sounds for tape loops were made. One loop consisted of overdubbed 'Aaaahs'; another, a high A note strummed rapidly on electric guitar. These are both heard in 'Revolution 9'. Both loops were fed 'live' from separate machines into an unreleased 'rough' mono mix of take 20 made on 4 June. It also includes other backing vocals with the words 'Mama, dada, mama,



Photo by Tony Bramwell

dada.' When Yoko is heard saying, 'Maybe, it's not that,' Paul, with an exaggerated Liverpool accent, says, 'It is that!' Two copies of that wild mix were taken away.

A lead guitar part by George and an arrangement for two trumpets and four trombones were the final elements to be added to 'Revolution 1' which, following three reduction mixes, had reached take 22 at its completion. By the time the brass section and guitar were recorded on 21 June, there had been a change of mind about the song. Its 10' 30" duration was shortened by fading it out at 4'15". Several of the strange sounds in the unused second half of the song had already been mixed into the sound collage 'Revolution 9', begun on 6 June.

The recording process for 'Revolution 1' was quite a statement of intent for the new album the group had embarked upon. The type of experimentation that occurred – and the creative involvement of Yoko Ono in the first track to be recorded – made it clear that these sessions would differ in their approach compared with those for *Sgt. Pepper* a year earlier… or for that matter, even the recordings in February, before the group left the country.

Recording details:
Revolution
Recorded: 9, 10 and 11 July 1968 – Studio Three, Abbey Road; 12 July 1968 – Studio Two, Abbey Road
Mono Mix: 15 July 1968 – *Stereo Mix:* 5 December 1969

John: lead vocal, guitar, handclaps :
Paul: bass, handclaps :
George: guitar, handclaps :
Ringo: drums :

Additional Instrument:
Nicky Hopkins: electric piano – *Recorded:* 11 July 1968 – Studio Three, Abbey Road

John was eager for his statement about the turmoil of 1968 to be released as a single, but met resistance. 'George and Paul said it wasn't fast enough,' John stated in 1980. 'Now, if you go into the details of what a hit record is and isn't, maybe. But The Beatles could have afforded to put out the slow, understandable version of "Revolution" as a single, whether it was a gold record or a wooden record!' His response was to have the group record the song again at a faster pace and more simply, with only an electric piano to augment the two guitars, bass, drums line-up.

After working on 'Ob-La-Di, Ob-La-Da' for the first part of a session on 9 July, The Beatles rehearsed a new arrangement for, as it was written on the tape box, 'Revolution (Remake)'. The following day, they decided to record over their previous night's work. Fortunately, six minutes of the rehearsal survived by chance on the end of the reel. As can be heard in the extract on CD Four – Sessions Track 9, this was an evolutionary step between the walking pace of the earlier version and the sprint of the second version released on the B-side of 'Hey Jude'. The most obvious difference is that the guitars played by John and George have a clean sound. As George works out a riff, there are hints of his later composition 'Old Brown Shoe'.

On 10 July, the driving force for the sound had become distortion – with a capital D. As George Martin recalled: 'We got into distortion on that, which we had a lot of complaints from the technical people about. But that was the idea. It was John's song and the idea was to push it right to the limit. Well, we went to the limit and beyond.' The distorted sound of the guitars played by John and George was not generated by overloading their amps and speaker cabinets in the studio. Their guitars were plugged straight into the mixing desk using DIT (Direct Injection Transformer) boxes. The overloaded mic amps in the desk produced a particularly abrasive form of distortion. Ten takes were made of the two guitars recorded to tracks one and two and Ringo's drum kit on track three. The best take was deemed to be the tenth so over this an extra snare drum and handclaps were added on track four.

Bouncing down to another four-track tape, the two guitar tracks were combined on track one and drums and percussion were mixed to track two. CD Four – Sessions Track 10 is the backing track at this point. Further overdubs included Nicky Hopkins playing electric piano on 11 July. The in-demand session player had recently played with Paul, George and Ringo in the 25 June session for the Jackie Lomax recording of 'Sour Milk Sea'. The final reduction mix for what was by now called 'Revolution No. 2' was take 16. Guitars were combined on track one; drums and handclaps were on track two; electric piano, two lead vocals and a third guitar part played by John had been mixed to track three and track four had Paul's bass part. Although as before, the song was played in A major, the released recording of this electric version was speeded up to be a semitone higher in B flat.

Due to the unusual length of 'Hey Jude' – it was at least twice as long as most singles – its sound level had to be lower than normal. With the volume on a record player turned up for the A-side, when the record was flipped over to play 'Revolution', listeners were startled by both its loudness and distortion; exactly what John was aiming for, of course. 'The thing about "Revolution",' George mused in an interview for the TV series *The Beatles Anthology*, 'is that it's not so much the song but the attitude in which it was done. I think "Revolution" is pretty good and it grooves along, but I don't particularly like the noise that it makes; and I say "noise" because I didn't like the distorted sound.' The song was eventually mixed in stereo at the end of 1969. When John heard it, he was disappointed: 'They took a heavy record and turned it into a piece of ice cream!'

Honey Pie

01.10.1968

'This is me pretending I'm living in 1925!' Paul joked in 1968. 'I would quite like to have been a 1920s writer in a top hat and tails. I like the melodies and the lyrics of old songs.' Indeed, the silver screen alias of the girl 'from north of England way', is reminiscent of Sugar Kane, the name of Marilyn Monroe's character in *Some Like It Hot*, the classic film comedy set in 1929. Paul's song conjures up a romantic image of the Roaring Twenties, in which ravishing flappers dance with playboys wearing tuxedos and spats. They are all devoted, of course, to the 'hot kind of music' played by jazz orchestras in ritzy restaurants.

During the late 1920s, Paul's father had led his own dance combo – Jim Mac's Jazz Band – in which he played trumpet and piano. 'I grew up steeped in that tradition,' Paul recalled. 'My dad was a pretty good player, he could play a lot of tunes on the piano. He once worked at the Liverpool Hippodrome as a spotlight operator. He'd learned his music from listening to it every single night of the week, two shows every night, Sundays off.' In Paul's childhood during the 1940s and early 1950s, there were regular family sing-songs of pre-war favourites led by his dad at the piano.

The influence of this pre-rock 'n' roll style permeates Paul's entire catalogue. Prior to the release of 'Honey Pie', The Beatles' 1967 recordings of 'When I'm Sixty-Four' and 'Your Mother Should Know' were affectionate nods to the hits made before they were born. As with

MONO/STEREO

RECORDING SHEET

Sheet: 1 of: 2. Class: POP. Overall Title:

Date of Session: 7th October '68 Job No: 1069.

ARTISTIC INFORMATION				COSTING INFORMATION			
ARTISTE(S) AND/OR CAST	THE BEATLE	CONDUCTOR		MATERIALS USED	2x811(¼)/4x811(1")	ORDER NUMBER	
		ORCHESTRA		SESSION BOOKED TIME	2.30-5.30	COMPANY	PARLOPHONE
		ACCOMPANIMENT		SESSION ACTUAL	2.30-7.00am	STUDIO/CONTROL ROOM	~~T.T.~~ 2-2
		ART. DEPT. REP.	MR G. MARTIN	SET-UP/PLAYBACK	½	ENGINEERS	KMS-MWS.

TITLES and MATRIX Nos.	AUTHOR/COMPOSER/PUBLISHER	REEL NUMBERS	FALSE STARTS	TAKE No.	TAKE DETAILS FROM	TAKE DETAILS TO	DUR.	M	REMARKS
HONEY ~~CHILD~~ PIE.		E70547.			-COMPLETE-				MONO (NAB) → MONO (CCIR)
MARTHA MY DEAR.					— "	—			MONO → MONO (CORRECTED COPY)
MARTHA MY DEAR.		E70548Z			-COMPLETE-				CORRECTED COPY
HONEY					— "	—			— " —
WHILE MY GUITAR. GENTLY. WEEP		E70548Z		RS1	-COMPLETE-		4.45	BEST	
WHILE MY GUITAR GENTLY WEEPS.		E70547.		RM1	-COMPLETE-		4.45	BEST.	
				RM2	— "	—	4.52		
IT'S BEEN A LONG LONG		E70550		1	B/D		/		
LONG TIME		8 TRACK.		2	-COMPLETE-		2.46		GOOD
			3&4	5	— "	— ?	2.49		
			6	7	— B/D	—	2.02		X.
			8-11	12	— B/D	—	2.35		
				13	— B/D	—	1.02		ADLIB START.
			14-17						
		E70551		18	GOOD	ADLIB	.35.		TAKE 14 2.40
		8 TRACK.		20	B/D		2.39.		
				21	B/D		.55		
				22	B/D		.50		
			23/6	27	-COMPLETE-		2.42		
			28	29	GOOD	INTR.	?		
			30-3	34	B/D		1.45		
			35	36	COMPLETE				
		E70552	37/8	39	— "	—	2.25		
		8 TRACK.	40	41	— "	—	2.37		A1"
				42	— "	—	2.40		

Ref. 9864

2x811(¼) ADT TAPE FOR No 2.

MONO/STEREO

RECORDING SHEET

Sheet: 1 of: 1 Class: POP Overall Title: MONO + STEREO REDUCTIONS + SUPERIMPOSITION

Date of Session: 14 OCTOBER 1968 Job No: 1069

ARTISTIC INFORMATION				COSTING INFORMATION			
ARTISTE(S) AND/OR CAST	The Beatles	CONDUCTOR		MATERIALS USED	2x811(¼")	ORDER NUMBER	
		ORCHESTRA		SESSION BOOKED TIME	7-12	COMPANY	
		ACCOMPANIMENT		SESSION ACTUAL	7-7.30	STUDIO/CONTROL ROOM	2-2
		ART. DEPT. REP.	Mr G. Martin	SET-UP/PLAYBACK	½	ENGINEERS	KS-JS

TITLES and MATRIX Nos.	AUTHOR/COMPOSER/PUBLISHER	REEL NUMBERS	FALSE STARTS	TAKE No.	TAKE DETAILS FROM	TAKE DETAILS TO	DUR.	M	REMARKS
I Will		E70412Z (CONT)		RS1	COMPLETE		1.45	BEST	
Birthday				RS1	— "	—	2.40	BEST	
Savoy Truffle				1	— "	—			BEST (TAPE FROM TRIDENT STUDIO)
Savoy Truffle		E70662 (¼")	RM1-2	RM3	— "	—	2.52		
			RM4-5	RM6	— "	—	2.52	BEST	
Savoy Truffle.		E70412Z (CONT)		RS1	— "	—	2.52		
				RS2	— "	—	2.52	BEST	
While My Guitar Gently Weeps		E70662 (CONT)	RM10	RM11	— "	—	4.45	BEST	
While My Guitar Gently Weeps		E70412Z		RS10	— "	—	4.40		
		(CONT.	RS11	RS12	— "	—	4.42	BEST	
Long Long Long		E70662 (CONT)	RM2	RM3	— "	—	3.01	BEST.	
Yer Blues		E70663Z (¼")		RS5	— "	—	3.50	BEST	
Sexy Sadie.				RS3	— "	—		BEST	
What's New Mary Jane.				RS2	— "	—		BEST	

Ref. 9864

many of the standards by writers such as the Gershwin brothers and Cole Porter, 'Honey Pie' has an introductory verse sung to a tune that does not appear elsewhere in the song. This technique was used for other Lennon-McCartney compositions such as 'Do You Want To Know A Secret' and 'Here, There And Everywhere'.

Recording details:
Recorded: 1, 2 and 4 October 1968 – Trident Studios
Mono Mix: 5 October 1968 – *Stereo Mix:* 5 October 1968

Paul: lead vocal, piano :
John: guitar :
George: bass :
Ringo: drums :

Additional Instruments:
Five saxophones, two clarinets – *Recorded:* 4 October 1968 – Trident Studios

The penultimate week of sessions for the double LP – Tuesday 1 to Saturday 5 October 1968 – was spent in Trident Studios. On the first day there, The Beatles recorded the instrumental backing for 'Honey Pie' across four tracks of an eight-track tape. Paul played piano so George provided the bass part on a six-string Fender VI. The following night, the remaining tracks were used for overdubs. Paul's lead vocal was on track five; the guitar solo by John and some cymbal grabs were on track six. 'Now she's hit the big time' was distorted and put through a frequency filter to replicate what the tape box described as a '78 vocal' on track seven. It was an aural reference to the scratchy sound of discs played at the speed of 78 revolutions per minute from the era that 'Honey Pie' evoked. A second electric guitar part heard during Paul's introductory verse was recorded on track eight.

CD Six – Sessions Track 10 is 'Honey Pie' with Paul's lead vocal on track five faded out. The original mono album had included more notes than the stereo version of John's solo. This instrumental mix presents all of it. 'John played a brilliant solo on "Honey Pie", George commented in 1987. 'It sounded like Django Reinhardt or something. It was one of them where you just close your eyes and happen to hit all the right notes … sounded like a little jazz solo.' Recorded on tracks seven and eight, George Martin's authentic-sounding arrangement for saxophones and clarinets perfectly matched the mood of Paul's tribute to the Jazz Age.

Savoy Truffle

03.10.1968

'I now want to write songs that don't have any meaning,' George told the British pop paper *NME*, 'because I'm a bit fed up with people coming up and saying, "Hey, what's it all about? What does it mean?"' The article was published in an edition of the *NME* dated 21 September 1968 – a week before recording commenced for George's confection 'Savoy Truffle'. 'This next album is much simpler than *Pepper* because it's more down to guitars, bass and drums, and maybe a piano,' George told journalist Alan Smith. 'Extending his "I'm a Rocker Again" thesis,' Smith reported, 'George said he didn't care to dwell on the "Mystical Beatle George" anymore: 'It's still all "Within You, Without You",' he added, 'but I don't want to go into that any more, cos now I'm being a rock 'n' roll star!' The crooked grin broke into a crooked smile.'

'Savoy Truffle' fits George's summary of a new musical approach. It is a straightforward good-time rocker and the words are mostly lifted from the names on the lid of a box of 'Good News' soft-centred chocolates. '"Savoy Truffle" is a funny one written whilst hanging out with Eric Clapton,' George remembered. 'At that time, he had a lot of cavities in his teeth and needed dental work. He always had toothache, but he ate a lot of chocolates – he couldn't resist them and once he saw a box he *had* to eat them all.' The inclusion of the phrase 'what you eat you are' was suggested by Derek Taylor, whose friend Alan Pariser had worked on the counterculture film *You Are What You Eat*. Released in September 1968, the movie's music would have appealed to George. It included collaborations between two of his current favourites: ukulele virtuoso and falsetto warbler Tiny Tim, and Bob Dylan's former backing group The Band. And, of course, by side four of 'The White Album', we did all know 'Ob-La-Di, Ob-La-Da'.

Recording details:
Recorded: 3 and 5 October 1968 – Trident Studios; 11 and 14 October 1968 – Studio Two, Abbey Road
Mono Mix: 14 October 1968 – *Stereo Mix:* 14 October 1968

George: lead vocal, guitar :
Paul: backing vocal, bass :
Ringo: drums, tambourine :

Additional Instruments:
Four tenor saxophones, two baritone saxophones – *Recorded:* 11 October 1968 – Studio Two, Abbey Road
Chris Thomas: electric piano, organ – *Recorded:* 14 October 1968

On the third day of The Beatles' October stay at Trident Studios, the basic rhythm track for 'Savoy Truffle' was laid down on an eight-track tape. Ringo's drums were recorded on track one; Paul's bass is on two; George's rhythm guitar is on three. There are no outtakes or rehearsals on the surviving tape – just 'take one'. On 5 October, George played acoustic guitar and sang the lead vocal with Paul harmonising in parts. Then further work on 'Savoy Truffle' continued at Abbey Road six days later, including a tambourine and a lead guitar part recorded on track four.

Chris Thomas had written a punchy arrangement for saxophones that was overdubbed on tracks six and seven at the beginning of the session on 11 October. The saxes were recorded, at George's request, at maximum level with heavy compression. The sound generated is dangerously close to distortion, but never crosses the line. The saxes simply sound exciting and edgy. From close listening to track seven of the tape, it seems that George and Paul redid their vocals at Abbey Road. It is possible to hear the song playing through their headphones – with the saxes already present. With the vocal track faded out, CD Six – Sessions Track 11 is a mix of all the musical ingredients that make up 'Savoy Truffle'.

Cry Baby Cry

15.07.1968

For several of his songs on 'The White Album', John abandoned the imagery and wordplay heard on many of The Beatles' records from 1967, such as 'Lucy In The Sky With Diamonds' and 'I Am The Walrus'. For example, 'Yer Blues', 'I'm So Tired' and 'Revolution' were unguardedly direct and candid. But not all of John's songs in 1968 followed that direction. The lyric of 'Cry Baby Cry' seems to stem from another trip down the rabbit hole to a land that is inhabited by nursery rhyme figures and where there are modern twists to familiar tales. In the traditional 'Sing a Song of Sixpence', the King is 'in his counting house counting out his money', but in John's song he is found in the kitchen 'cooking breakfast for the Queen'. Meanwhile,



rather than 'eating bread and honey', the Queen in 'Cry Baby Cry' is in the parlour playing piano for the children of the King. Remembering happy childhood holidays in Scotland, John dreamt up a Duchess for the small town of Kirkcaldy in Fife.

John found the seed of the song at the end of 1967. The Beatles' official biographer, Hunter Davies, happened to hear an early sketch of 'Cry Baby Cry', after John had been sitting at the piano 'doodling over it for hours while his fingers look for bits of tunes'. John told Davies, 'I've been playing it over on the piano … a few words, I think I got from an advert – "Cry baby cry, make your mother buy." I've let it go now. It'll come back if I really want it.' Creating an eerie atmosphere, the verse begins with an E minor chord under which bass notes descend in semitones from E until reaching the root note of a C major chord. It is likely that John fleshed out this early fragment on his acoustic guitar while in Rishikesh. By the time The Beatles had gathered in Esher for their demo recordings, both the music and lyric for 'Cry Baby Cry' were finished.

Twelve years after it was recorded, John judged his gem of a song to be a 'piece of rubbish'. When he was asked who had written it, he replied, 'Not me.'

Recording details:
Version One (Rehearsal):
Recorded: 15 July 1968 – Studio Two, Abbey Road

John: lead vocal, organ
Paul: bass
George: electric guitar
Ringo: drums

Version Two:
Recorded: 16 and 18 July 1968 and 16 September 1968 – Studio Two, Abbey Road
Mono Mix: 15 October 1968 – *Stereo Mix:* 15 October 1968

John: lead vocal, acoustic guitar, whistling
Paul: bass, guitar, piano, whistling
George: guitar
Ringo: drums, tambourine

Additional Instrument:
George Martin: harmonium – *Recorded:* 16 and 18 July 1968

The Esher demo version is simply a mix of John's double-tracked vocal and his acoustic guitar accompaniment. When The Beatles first turned to the song in the studio, they tried a different arrangement. Although long assumed that their many rehearsals played during the evening of 15 July had all been wiped, this is not the case. True, the reels of four-track tape from that session were used again to record 'Cry Baby Cry' the following night and also 'Helter Skelter', three days later. But during the research for this project, around 18 minutes of the rehearsals were discovered at the ends of two spools of tape that had not been erased after the new recordings had stopped. As can be heard on CD Four – Sessions Track 11, the initial line up was bass on track one; organ and electric guitar on track two; drums on track three with a live vocal on track four. 'I declare this organ heavy!' John laughed. 'Make your mother splime' he sang during one of the seemingly good-natured rehearsals. 'How was it?' he asked the team in the control room. 'Let's have a rest,' he suggests towards the end of a reel.

When The Beatles came to work the next evening, John had returned to playing acoustic guitar on the song. It turned out the organ was *too* heavy. Right from the beginning of this session, John sang with a wispy vibrato that was reminiscent of a mannerism of The Beatles' friend in India, Donovan. In fact, this characteristic was prominent on Donovan's hit at this time, 'Hurdy Gurdy Man'. Composed in Rishikesh, George had written a verse for Donovan's song, but it was not recorded. The first take of the day of 'Cry Baby Cry' – released 28 years later on *Anthology 3* – was a complete performance with a live vocal. From the recording of this song onwards in the 1968 sessions, rather than planning to add the final singing parts while they were tracking other elements, The Beatles often aimed to capture a lead vocal as part of the basic track.

Take ten was agreed to be the best performance and was bounced to another tape to free up two tracks. Take 12 was the master take onto which various ingredients were added on 18 July. During the opening chorus, Paul can be heard singing a melody that was played on harmonium by George Martin on track three. A piano part and tea-for-the-Duchess sound effects were also added to this track. One unusual sound in the second verse, sometimes thought to be high notes played on an organ, was created by two of the group whistling. One held a high E, while the other descended in semitones to C. The song was finished two months later when the audio was transferred to tracks five to eight of an eight-track tape. Descending piano bass notes in cavernous echo were recorded on track one, and new drums and a tambourine are heard on track two of the new tape.

The second day of work on 'Cry Baby Cry' was the last session of 1968 with Geoff Emerick at the mixing desk. He had balanced most of the group's records since the opening session for *Revolver* in April 1966. He has not pulled his punches when describing what he remembers as the unhappy circumstances of the sessions for 'The White Album'. Ken Scott, who had worked with the group on some of the tracks for *Magical Mystery Tour* replaced his unhappy colleague. In his book *Abbey Road to Ziggy Stardust*, Ken offered a different view to Geoff's that seems to be confirmed from the evidence of many hours of recordings captured on tape: 'Over the years there has been so much written about the animosity that supposedly pervaded the studio … and it's all been blown way out of proportion. Of course, there was some strife, but there always is during any project, and what The Beatles experienced during the making of "The White Album" just wasn't that different from what I've experienced on most projects at some time or another.'

Revolution 9

30.05.1968

Apart from a brief extract of an improvised song by Paul at the beginning, 'Revolution 9' was not composed in a conventional way. It is an audio collage created by the manipulation of found sounds and newly made recordings. Speaking in 1990 about the longest of all The Beatles' tracks, George Martin was enthusiastic: 'I love "Revolution 9". You could sit in front of those two speakers and actually see things happening if you shut your eyes. It wasn't music, but it was a sound picture.'

By 1968, experimentation with tape was not a new concept for The Beatles. 'I had two Brenell tape recorders hooked up,' Paul recalled. 'And there were all these electronic composers you were listening to for a break from our own style of music.' Inspired by the work of Karlheinz Stockhausen and Luciano Berio, Paul had discovered that disconnecting the erase head of a Brenell machine allowed a sound to be recorded over and over again, saturating the tape. 'I could make some very strange noises and so late at night you would say, "Listen to this!" It was just sort of far-out music, really. It had turned John on so he got two Brenells and I set all that up for him at his house.'

MONO/STEREO

RECORDING SHEET

Sheet: 1 of: 1 Class: POP Overall Title: MONO + STEREO TAPE COPYING. Date of Session: 27 AUGUST 1968 Job No: 1069

ARTISTIC INFORMATION			COSTING INFORMATION			
ARTISTE(S) AND/OR CAST	THE BEATLES	CONDUCTOR	MATERIALS USED	1x7" PLASTIC SPOOL	ORDER NUMBER	
		ORCHESTRA	SESSION BOOKED TIME		COMPANY	
		ACCOMPANIMENT	SESSION ACTUAL	4.30 - 5.00	~~STUDIO~~/CONTROL ROOM	2
		ART. DEPT. REP.	SET-UP/PLAYBACK		ENGINEERS	KS - JS

TITLES and MATRIX Nos.	AUTHOR/COMPOSER/ PUBLISHER	REEL NUMBERS	FALSE STARTS	TAKE No.	TAKE DETAILS FROM	TO	DUR.	M	REMARKS
OB LA DI OB LA DA				1	COMPLETE		3.11	*	
BLACKBIRD				1	— "	—	2.20	*	
NOT GUILTY				1	— "	—	4.11	*	
REVOLUTION Nº9 (STEREO)				1	— "	—	9.05	*	

* CUT OUT AND TAKEN AWAY, ON A 7" PLASTIC SPOOL BY MR M. EVANS

M. F. Evans

Ref. 9864

MONO/~~STEREO~~ 4T

RECORDING SHEET

Sheet: 1 of: Class: POP Overall Title: 4TST Date of Session: 23-7-68 Job No: 1069

ARTISTIC INFORMATION				COSTING INFORMATION 2x5" Spool			
ARTISTE(S) AND/OR CAST	THE BEATLES	CONDUCTOR		MATERIALS USED	1 x 811 (1/4")	ORDER NUMBER	
		ORCHESTRA		SESSION BOOKED TIME	7 - 12	COMPANY	PARLO
		ACCOMPANIMENT		SESSION ACTUAL	7 - 230	STUDIO/CONTROL ROOM	2-2
		ART. DEPT. REP.	G.H. MARTIN	SET-UP/PLAYBACK		ENGINEERS	KSRL

TITLES and MATRIX Nos.	AUTHOR/COMPOSER/ PUBLISHER	REEL NUMBERS	FALSE STARTS	TAKE No.	TAKE DETAILS FROM	TO	DUR.	M	REMARKS
EVERYBODYS GOT SOMETHING TO HIDE EXCEPT FOR ME AND MY MONKEY.		E68760 4T contd.		10	COMPLETE				SI VOCAL TRK 4
		E69181 4T.		12	— .	—		Best.	4T - 4T OF TK10 +SI VOCAL TRK 4.
— .. —		E69652 MONO		RM1	— .	—			4T - MONO OF TK 12.
				RM2/3 FS					
				RM4	— .	—			
			*	RM5	— .	—	230	Best	
GOODNIGHT.		E— . —		RM1	— .	—			4T 34.
				RM2	— .	—			
				RM3	—	—			
				RM4	—	—			
				RM5	— .	—			
			*	RM6	— .	—		Best.	— . —

2 COPY TAPES OF *RM6 & *RM5

GIVEN TO J. LENNON

& RINGO STARR

‘Tomorrow Never Knows’, the first track recorded for *Revolver* in April 1966, featured a live mix of homemade tape loops played from machines all around the EMI Recording Studios at Abbey Road. A year and a half later, instead of ethereal-sounding loops, the mix of ‘I Am The Walrus’ included random snatches of dialogue faded in and out from a BBC radio broadcast of Shakespeare’s *King Lear*. This was adventurous stuff – a startling fusion of avant-garde ideas and pop. But ‘Revolution 9’ was far more radical than those innovations. For most listeners, its organised noise was their first experience of *musique concrète*.

The creation of ‘Revolution 9’ was masterminded by John and his new partner Yoko Ono. ‘It was somewhat under her influence,’ Lennon explained. ‘Once I heard her stuff – not just the screeching and the howling, but her word pieces and talking and breathing and all this strange stuff, I got intrigued. I wanted to do one.’ The couple’s relationship had begun on 19 May 1968 when they worked together on a totally spontaneous piece, recorded in real time, in John’s home studio on the third floor of his house in Weybridge, Surrey. A synthesis of dialogue, music and noises on tape, the duo’s collaboration was released in the UK a week after ‘The White Album’ as *Unfinished Music No. 1: Two Virgins*.

Although he had long been interested in the contemporary avant-garde scene, Paul had no involvement in making ‘Revolution 9’ and, once completed, the track was bound to arouse differing opinions about whether it really did belong on a record credited to The Beatles. ‘We created Apple for just that,’ Paul remembered. ‘I had some stuff I could have done too. I remember once saying to John that I was going to do an album called *Paul McCartney Goes Too Far*. He was really tickled with that idea. He said, “That’s great. You really should do it.” I would calculate and think, “No, I’d better do ‘Hey Jude’, you know.”’

Recording details:
Recorded: 30 May, 6 June 1968 – Studio Two, Abbey Road; 10 and 11 June 1968 – Studio Three, Abbey Road; 20 June 1968, Studios One, Two and Three, Abbey Road;
Mono Mix: Fold down from master stereo mix on 26 August 1968 –
Stereo Mix: 21 and 25 June 1968

John, George, George Martin, Yoko Ono, Alistair Taylor: voices :

‘It was vaguely to do with the sounds of a revolution,’ John explained in 1968. ‘There was some shooting, and there were some babies crying, and there was some peace, so that’s the sort of vague story behind it. But apart from that, it’s just a set of sounds.’ It is a large and diverse set of sounds. Some were drawn from the discarded second section of ‘Revolution 1’, in which John improvised vocally around the phrase ‘It’s gonna be all right’ and Yoko’s pre-recorded speech tracks were played from a tape machine. The Abbey Road sound effects collection also proved very useful, as it had done before, particularly during the *Sgt. Pepper* sessions. ‘Ringo and I went into the tape library and looked through the entire room,’ George remembered. ‘We gave the tapes to John and he cut them together.’ One of them was an examination tape for the Royal Academy of Music. John was amused by the way a musical extract was announced and so he looped two words: ‘Number Nine’.

During the evening of 11 June, John was busy sorting out many of the sounds effects for the audio collage in Studio Three, while Paul was recording ‘Blackbird’. However, John did spend time in Studio Two to experiment with contributing a musical accompaniment on either guitar or piano and to suggest arrangement ideas for ‘Blackbird’. There were no Beatles sessions after that day until John, Yoko, George and George Martin assembled ‘Revolution 9’ on 20 June. Paul flew to Los Angeles on this day. Before mixing the many elements together, George and John were recorded speaking in the studio. ‘All the words on “Revolution 9” were just random talking, there was nothing written down,’ John recalled. ‘George and I just talked for about twenty minutes. You know, just rambling.’ Phrases that are now familiar to millions emerged from these ramblings: ‘financial imbalance’, ‘the Watusi’, ‘the Twist’, ‘Eldorado’.

When it came to mixing, the process was similar to the way various sounds had been mixed in and out of ‘Tomorrow Never Knows’. With loops being played from several tape machines, John lifted faders up and down on the mixing desk to hear them. ‘It was like a big organ or something, where I knew vaguely which track would come up if I did that and I’d try to pull out the ones I didn’t like. I just tried to get the bits of conversation in that I liked.’ The experience sounds similar to scanning short-wave radio stations at night to hear exotic music and speech skipping thousands of miles across the ionosphere. Of course, the stereo sound picture gave the kaleidoscopic clash of cultures another dimension for the listener as sounds flew from one side to the other.

On 2 December 1968, three students from Keele University in Staffordshire – Maurice Hindle, Daniel Wiles and Bob Cross – sat down with John and Yoko for a very lengthy interview for their campus arts magazine. Much to Maurice’s surprise, John had replied to a request for an interview, telling him to call from a telephone box at Weybridge railway station so he could meet the students to drive them to his house. Throughout 1968, the topic of revolution had been keenly debated, especially by students and left-wing groups. While talking politics, they discussed ‘Revolution 9’: ‘It’s not specifically about anything,’ John told them. ‘It’s a set of sounds like walking down the street. I’ve just captured a moment of time and put it on disc. I think I did it in one go. I just got it and then I did some slight editing after that. And so most of it is completely random, in that respect, and all the words. But you see, it’s like throwing the dice, or *I Ching*, or whatever it is. There’s no such thing as random, really. It’s random compared with sitting down and saying, “It’s been a hard day’s night”.’

Good Night

28.06.1968

‘John rarely showed his tender side,’ Paul reflected. ‘But my key memories of John are when he was tender. I always cite “Good Night” as an example of the John beneath the surface that we only saw occasionally.’

The seismic impact of rock ’n’ roll upon The Beatles’ lives occurred when they were in their teenage years. Before then, during family get-togethers or when listening to the BBC Light Programme radio network, they heard a variety of music that also had a significant influence. ‘We actually did like a lot of music before rock ’n’ roll galvanised the whole thing into a direction where you had to go,’ Paul recalled. ‘I know one of John’s favourite songs, which is way before rock ’n’ roll, was “Don’t Blame Me” and another was “Little White Lies”. Written by Jimmy McHugh and Dorothy Fields for the 1932 show *Clowns in Clover*, ‘Don’t Blame Me’ was revived by Johnny Ray in 1952. Dick Haymes and Dinah Shore both recorded Walter Donaldson’s ‘Little White Lies in 1947, and ten years later Ruby Murray popularised it in the UK. ‘Rock ’n’ roll gave us a direction in life,’ Paul continued. ‘That was finally when instead of just liking “Little White Lies” and “Don’t Blame Me” and various other songs, it was a question of doing it.’



However, by 1968, any musical style could find its way onto a Beatles record alongside the group's rock tracks. The orchestral arrangement of 'Good Night' helped to place it firmly in the style of the songs Paul mentioned as pre-rock 'n' roll favourites. Sure enough, within just a few weeks of the release of *The Beatles*, Vera Lynn, 'The Forces' Sweetheart' during the Second World War, had issued a cover version of 'Good Night' with a similar orchestral arrangement. 'You could almost be forgiven for thinking "Good Night" was mine, because it's so soft and melodic and so un-John,' Paul posited. 'I believe John wrote this as a lullaby for Julian and it was a very beautiful song that Ringo ended up singing to the accompaniment of a big orchestra. I think John felt it might not be good for his image to sing it.'

Recording details:
Version One:
Recorded: 28 June and 2 July 1968 – Studio Two, Abbey Road

Ringo: lead vocal, bongo drum
John: three guitars, backing vocal
Paul: backing vocal
George: backing vocal

Rehearsal:
Recorded: July 1968 – Studio One, Abbey Road

Ringo: vocal
George: shaker

Additional Instrument:
George Martin: piano

Version Two:
Recorded: 22 July 1968 – Studio One, Abbey Road
Mono Mix: 11 October 1968 – *Stereo Mix:* 11 October 1968

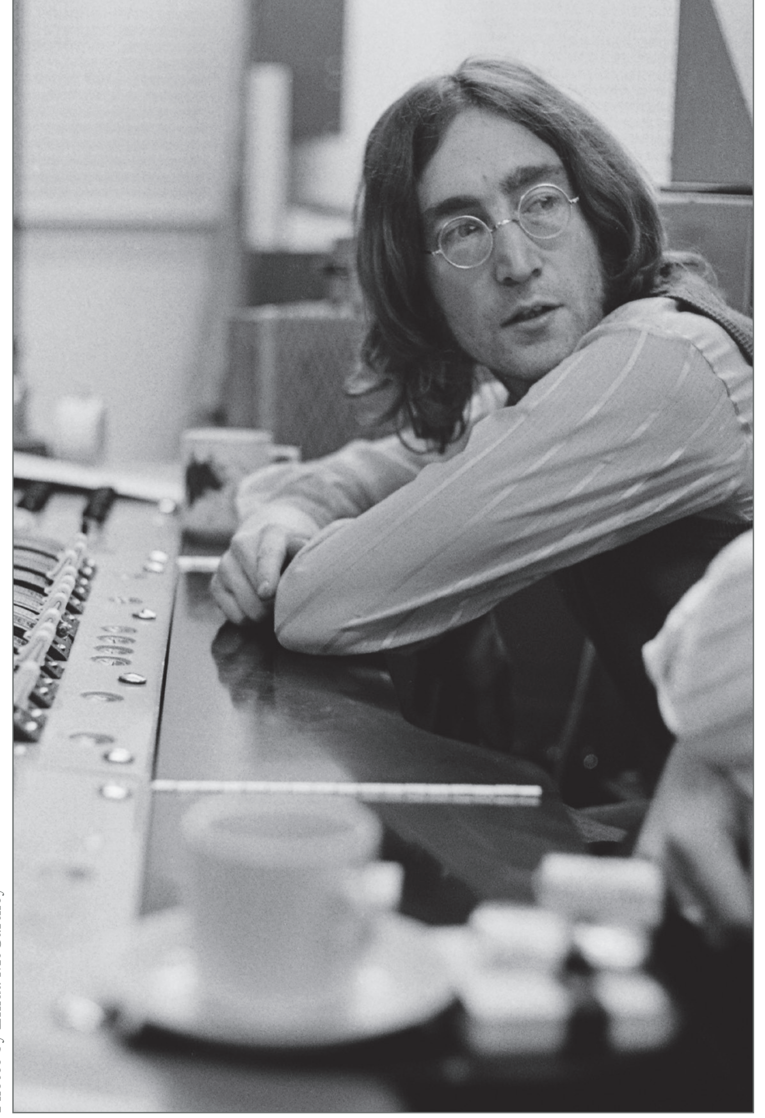
Ringo: vocal

Additional Instruments:
George Martin: piano, celeste
Mike Sammes Singers: choir
Twelve violins, three violas, three cellos, three flutes, clarinet, French horn, vibraphone, double bass, harp

The first session tape has five takes of John's gentle electric guitar accompaniment in the finger-picking style of 'Julia' and 'Dear Prudence'. He was happy with take five so added two more guitar parts to tracks two and three on the four-track tape. The guitar on track two was recorded at half-speed so when played back at normal speed was heard an octave higher. On 2 July, take five was bounced down to another tape to become take six with all three guitars parts combined to track one. CD Four – Sessions Track 6 is take ten with Ringo singing his lead vocal at the same time as John, Paul and George providing harmony vocals. They sang vocals over the mixed guitars for three more takes. After take 13, John said 'Sugar Plum Fairy', his now familiar count-in to 'A Day In The Life', made the year before.

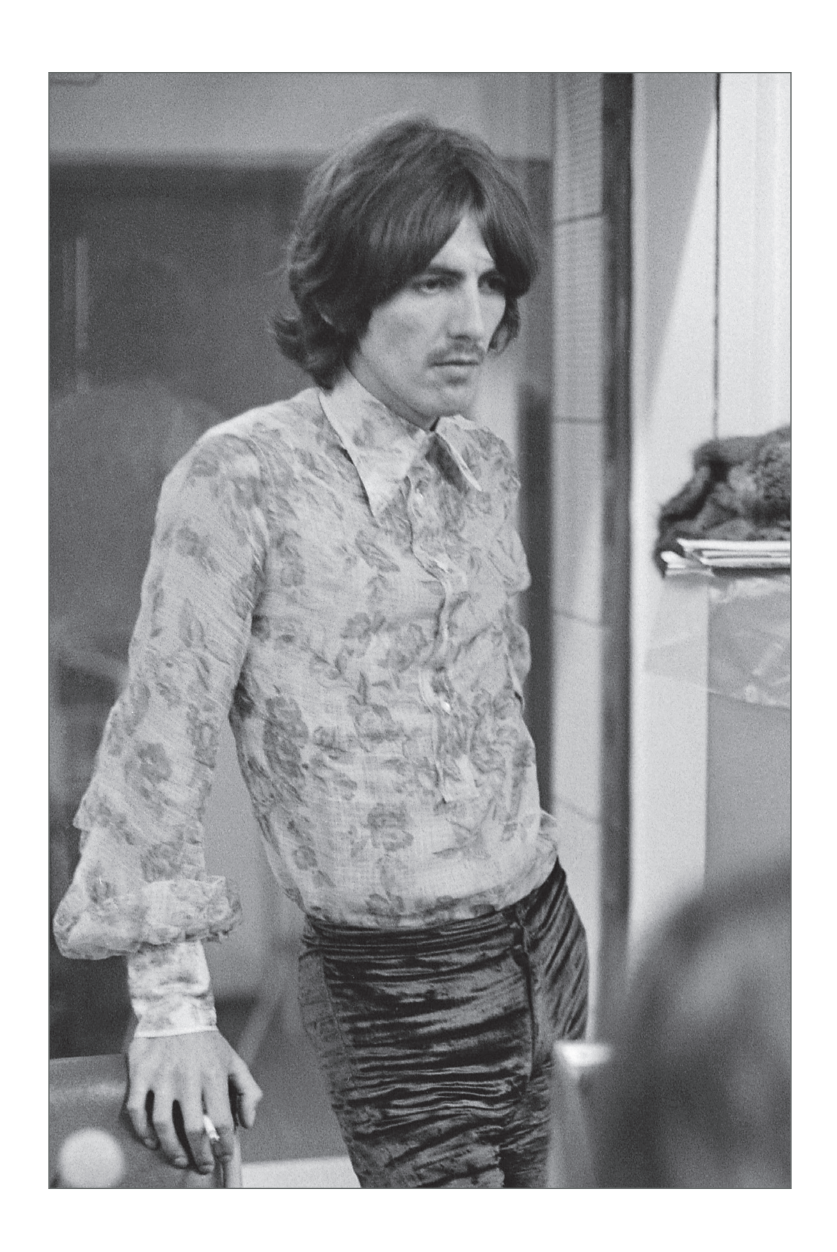
On a third tape there are a few short try-outs of Ringo doing a spoken introduction to 'Good Night': 'Come on, it's time you little toddlers were in bed.' 'Come along now, we must go to bed. We've had a wonderful day.' 'Cover yourself up Charlie, no peeking.' John also suggested speaking the first verse; CD Four – Sessions Track 5 is an attempt at that idea. The studio session sheet noted that George Martin took away two copies of take 15, which was a basic performance of John playing acoustic guitar with some percussion and Ringo singing. Presumably, by then, the version with a multi-guitar accompaniment had been rejected in favour of an orchestral arrangement scored by The Beatles' producer.

Before the session with an orchestra and choir took place, Ringo had rehearsed with George Martin accompanying him on piano. John was listening in the control room, while George shook a shaker to keep time. There appear to have been seven takes – described as takes 16 to 22 – but, only part of take 21 and the complete take 22 (CD Four – Sessions Track 7) survive on tape. Takes 23 to 34 were recordings of the orchestra playing while Ringo sang with them. 'Was Ringo in time with the orchestra?' George Martin asks, after conducting take 23. Ringo tried various spoken phrases to end the song – for example, 'Night, night, Daddy. Night, night, Mammy' at the end of take 32 – before whispering the words known from the released version at the close of take 34. The Mike Sammes Singers had contributed some unorthodox singing to 'I Am The Walrus' ten months earlier ('Oompah, Oompah, stick it up your jumper!'), but were in more familiar territory for their parts on 'Good Night'. The sustained high D during the introduction was sung by one of the sopranos from this accomplished choir.





Photos by Linda McCartney



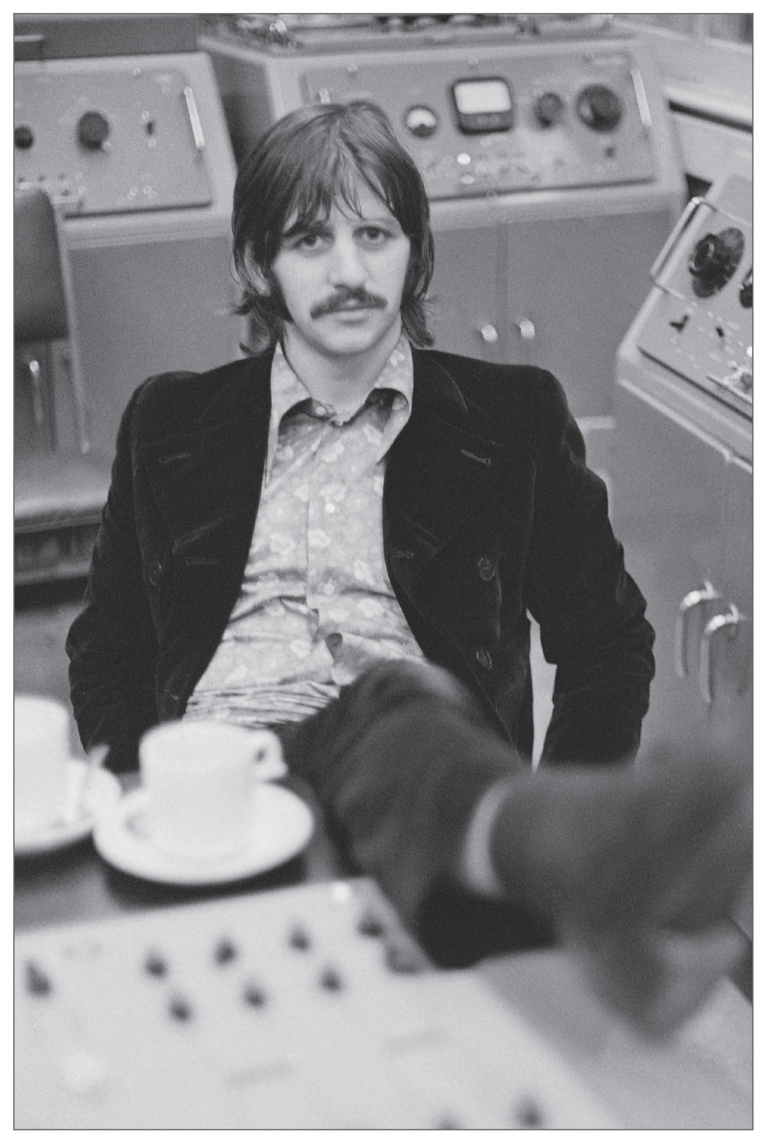




Photo by Linda McCartney

The Inner Light

12.01.1968

The Beatles' interest in Transcendental Meditation, as taught by Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, had prompted widespread media interest. A month after their first studies with Maharishi, John and George appeared on two consecutive editions of David Frost's TV chat show, *The Frost Report*, to discuss the benefits of meditation. During their second appearance, on 4 October 1967, various guests in the audience contributed to a lively debate. Writer and barrister John Mortimer was sceptical: 'It seems to be tremendously self-involved and, finally, tremendously selfish.' Spanish-born Cambridge University Sanskrit scholar Juan Mascaró talked about the pursuit of 'joy in the very centre of our souls and the joy of being and the joy of love'.

Juan Mascaró corresponded with George after the programme. He was enthusiastic about 'Within You Without You' from *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*. 'It is a moving song,' he wrote, 'may it move the souls of millions.' Mr Mascaró, who had translated *Bhagavad Gita* and other sacred texts, enclosed a copy of his first book *Lamps of Fire: The Spirit of Religions*. Drawing George's attention to a text he had selected for the collection from Lao-Tzu's *Tao Te Ching*, he wrote in a PS, 'Might it not be interesting to put in your music a few words of TAO, for example No. 48, page 66.'

George adapted the words in this passage for 'The Inner Light'. 'In the original poem,' George explained in his book *I Me Mine*, 'the verse says "Without going out of my door, I can know all things on earth…" And so to prevent any misinterpretations – and also to make the song a bit longer – I did repeat that as a second verse, but made it "Without going out of *your* door, *you* can know all things on earth…" The song was written especially for Juan Mascaró, because he sent me the book and is a sweet old man.'

The words were set to a mellifluous tune that greatly appealed to Paul. 'An unusual composition,' he commented in 1968. 'Forget the Indian music, and listen to the melody. Don't you think it's a beautiful melody? It's really lovely.'

Recording details:
Recorded: 12 and 13 January 1968 – HMV Studios, Bombay, India; 6 and 8 February 1968 – Studio Two, Abbey Road
Mono Mix: 8 February 1968 – *Stereo Mix:* 27 January 1970

George: lead vocal :
Paul: backing vocal :

Instruments:
Shehnai, flute, sarod, tabla, pakavaj, harmonium

George's work to produce music for the film *Wonderwall* had included a trip to Bombay (now Mumbai) for five days of sessions from 9 to 13 January 1968. The pieces from the Bombay sessions were beautifully recorded. The Chairman of EMI's affiliate in India at this time had proved to be an invaluable ally. 'Mr Bhaskar Menon brought a two-track tape machine all the way from Calcutta on the train for me,' George recalled, 'because all they had in Bombay at that time was a mono machine.'

The combination of George's disciplined approach during the recording process and the proficiency of the Indian musicians meant that all the soundtrack items were completed ahead of schedule. With spare studio time and such an impressive cast of players at hand, George took the opportunity to produce several recordings of ragas that might be used on The Beatles' records and also the music for 'The Inner Light'. One of the earlier takes of the instrumental was included as a bonus track on the 2014 reissue of George's album *Wonderwall Music*. The studio conversation heard during it reveals both how effectively George communicated with the players and their warm responses to his directions. **CD Six – Sessions Track 19** is take six – a dub of the backing track, to tracks one and two of a four-track tape, from take five on a reel recorded in Bombay.

On 6 February, George sang his lead vocal on track four with some 'live' double-tracking, and Paul's voice on some sections, recorded on track three. The song was released as the B-side of 'Lady Madonna' in March 1968. As most singles in 1968 were released in mono, 'The Inner Light' was not mixed in stereo until nearly two years later. Even then, the release of this stereo version was delayed until 1981, when the song was featured on a bonus disc for the box set *The Beatles EP Collection*.

Lady Madonna

03.02.1968

'I like the words: the "baby at your breast" bit,' Paul comments. 'Actually saying "baby at your breast" in a pop song was a little bit adventurous then. Although it's not really that controversial, because every painter has done a "Madonna and Child".' The picture that inspired Paul to write 'Lady Madonna' was not an Old Master, but a photograph by Howard Sochurek in the January 1965 edition of *National Geographic* magazine. The picture of a Malayo-Polynesian mother was captioned 'Mountain Madonna, with one child at her breast and another laughing into her face, sees her way of life threatened.' 'She looked very proud,' Paul remembers. 'I saw that as a kind of Madonna thing, mother and child, and you could just tell there's a bond. That photo affected me. I was inspired to write "Lady Madonna" from that photo.'

Paul recalls: 'The original concept quickly became symbolic of every woman; the Madonna image, but as applied to ordinary working-class women. I always want to pay tribute to them. "Lady Madonna" is really a tribute to the mother figure. The film director Allison Anders says if you look at my songs there's great support for the female and that is what made her able to write feminine characters for her screenplays.' 'Lady Madonna' follows a pattern of previous observational songs, such as 'Eleanor Rigby', 'For No One' and 'She's Leaving Home', where a scenario centred on a female character is described.

The Beatles' songs from their TV film *Magical Mystery Tour*, released in December 1967, were still imbued with the spirit of *Sgt. Pepper* and psychedelia. The arrival of 'Lady Madonna' on a single three months later seemed to herald a change of direction. 'It's not outright rock, but it's that kind of thing,' Paul explained in 1968. 'We think the time is right.' 'I describe it as "rockaswing",' Ringo commented. 'What Paul's doing is a kind of "Bad Penny Blues" [an instrumental hit in 1956 by Humphrey Lyttelton and His Band]. "Lady Madonna" is The Beatles' own rock 'n' roll record.'

'"Lady Madonna" was me sitting down at the piano trying to write a bluesy boogie-woogie thing,' Paul remembered. 'I got my left hand doing an arpeggio with the chord, an ascending boogie-woogie left hand, then a descending right hand. I always liked that, the juxtaposition of a line going down meeting a line going up.



Photo by Linda McCartney

It reminded me of Fats Domino, so I started singing a Fats Domino impression.' One of The Beatles' rock 'n' roll heroes, Fats returned the compliment by recording the song for his 1968 album *Fats Is Back*, which also included a version of 'Lovely Rita' from *Sgt. Pepper*. Little Junior Parker, an R&B pioneer from Memphis, also covered 'Lady Madonna'. Parker had made the original version of 'Mystery Train', later recorded by Elvis Presley for Sun Records. Elvis himself performed 'Lady Madonna' during studio rehearsals in 1971. An extract from an exciting run-through, with Charlie McCoy playing the original's horn parts on harmonica, was released in 1995.

Recording details:
Recorded: 3 February 1968 – Studio Three, Abbey Road;
6 February 1968 – Studio One, Abbey Road
Mono Mix: 15 February 1968 – *Stereo Mix:* 2 December 1969

Paul: lead vocal, backing vocal, piano, bass, Mellotron, handclaps :
John: backing vocal, guitar, handclaps :
George: backing vocal, guitar, handclaps :
Ringo: drums, tambourine, handclaps :

Additional Instruments:
Two tenor saxophones, two baritone saxophones –
Recorded: 6 February 1968 – Studio One, Abbey Road

Before The Beatles could leave the country in February 1968 to join Maharishi Mahesh Yogi at his ashram in Rishikesh, India, there was pressing work to do. Sure, they had recently been number one and two at Christmas in the UK with their single 'Hello, Goodbye' and double EP *Magical Mystery Tour*, but the pop scene moved fast in the 1960s. While they studied meditation in peaceful solitude, a rocking new single would be released in March 1968.

The swift recording process for 'Lady Madonna' followed a pattern established for many of the tracks they had made in 1967. It was layered step by step. The foundation was recorded on track one of a four-track tape: Paul's boogie-woogie piano and Ringo's 'rockaswing' drum part played with brushes. There were three takes. The first was incomplete; the third was the master. **CD Six – Sessions Track 20** is take two with some jazzy syncopation on the piano not tried in take three.

The remaining three tracks on this tape were filled with various overdubs. On track two, Ringo added more drums, John and George played guitars and Paul played bass. On track four, Paul's lead vocal was deliberately overloaded to give an edgy quality to the sound. On the same track, John blew some raspberry noises in imitation of a tuba and there were some handclaps. An extract from track three of the tape (**CD Six – Sessions Track 21**) features Mellotron lines and the high jinks of all four Beatles gathered round a microphone to contribute more mock brass. When take three, complete with overdubs, was bounced down, all the vocal parts on tracks three and four were combined on track four of the new tape. Track three was now available for some further recording that took place on 6 February, when four saxes followed the riffs from Paul's piano part.

'Lady Madonna' was reshaped by George Martin and his son Giles for the innovative 2006 soundtrack to the Cirque du Soleil Beatles show *LOVE*. Paul was delighted to find they had moved one part of the original recording to the foreground. 'You can finally hear the sax player Ronnie Scott. I used to know Ronnie and I'd meet him in Soho and go to his jazz club quite a lot. I said, "We need a nice wild sax solo." He came along to the session, played it great but, of course, in the mix we buried it. After he heard it on the radio, he said, "What did you do to my solo?" So on *LOVE*, at the end of "Lady Madonna", you finally hear Ronnie!'

Across The Universe

04.02.1968

The words came first to John. 'I was lying next to me first wife in bed and I was irritated. She must have been going on about something and I'd kept hearing these words over and over, flowing like an endless stream. I went downstairs and it turned into a sort of cosmic song rather than an irritated song. I couldn't get to sleep until I put it on paper. It *drove* me out of bed. It's not a matter of craftsmanship; it wrote itself.' John's graphic imagination ran free – just as it had in his recent song 'I Am The Walrus'. But if anyone had found meaning in the seductive jumble of images in that song, John's comments at the time would have disappointed them. 'People draw so many conclusions and it's ridiculous... What does it really mean, "I am the eggman"? It could have been the pudding basin for all I care. It's just tongue-in-cheek. It's not that serious.'

'Across The Universe' was a more gentle dip into poetry with a pleasing parade of elemental images: 'waves of joy', 'restless wind' and the 'shining of a million suns'. 'It's one of the best lyrics I've written,' John believed. 'In fact, it could be the best. It's good poetry, or whatever you call it. The ones I like are the ones that stand as words, without melody. They don't have to have any melody. You can read them like a poem.' Especially through its refrain 'Jai Guru Deva, Om', the song creates a meditational and spiritual atmosphere. The Sanskrit phrase is a mantra that gives thanks to Guru Dev, the teacher of Maharishi Mahesh Yogi.

Spike Milligan from the radio series *The Goon Show*, which The Beatles loved to listen to in the 1950s, was present during the second 'Across The Universe' session on 8 February. The April 1968 edition of *The Beatles Book Monthly* has a picture of Spike with George Martin, Paul and George in the control room. The magazine disclosed that 'another new number was started – one which was NOT used on the single. It is going to appear on a special charity LP.' That album was originated by Spike Milligan to raise money for the World Wildlife Fund. Entitled *No One's Gonna Change Our World*, it did not emerge until nearly two years later. Since that first appearance in December 1969, as related in the recording details, 'Across The Universe' has been issued in various forms on Beatles albums. In 1975, John collaborated on a soulful version released by David Bowie on *Young Americans*. 'I must say I admire him,' John said in 1980. 'I never really knew what he was … and meeting him doesn't give you much of a clue, because you don't know which one you're talking to!'

Recording details:
Version One:
Recorded: 4 February 1968 – Studio Three, Abbey Road;
8 February 1968 – Studio Two, Abbey Road
Mono Mix: 8 February 1968 with sound effects –
Stereo Mix: 2 October 1969 with sound effects added

John: lead vocal, acoustic guitar, electric guitar :
Paul: bass :
George: tamboura, swaramandala :
Ringo: tom-tom :

Lizzie Bravo and *Gayleen Pease:* backing vocals :

~~MONO/STEREO~~ 4T.

RECORDING SHEET

Sheet: .... of: 1 Class: PoP. Overall Title .... Date of Session 4TH FEB. 68. Job No: 1058

ARTISTIC INFORMATION

ARTISTE(S) AND/OR CAST: THE BEATLES.

CONDUCTOR:
ORCHESTRA:
ACCOMPANIMENT:
ART. DEPT. REP.: MR. G. H. MARTIN.

COSTING INFORMATION

MATERIALS USED: 1x811 ¼" 1x811 4T
SESSION BOOKED TIME: 6 – 12
SESSION ACTUAL: 8. 2 00
SET-UP/PLAYBACK: 1½ TIDY UP.
ORDER NUMBER:
COMPANY: PARLO.
STUDIO/CONTROL ROOM: No 3
ENGINEERS: MB Pnc

TITLES and MATRIX Nos.	AUTHOR/COMPOSER/PUBLISHER	REEL NUMBERS	FALSE STARTS	TAKE No.	TAKE DETAILS FROM	TAKE DETAILS TO	DUR.	M	REMARKS
ACCROSS THE UNIVERSE.		E 67494. 4T.	SI	1	COMPLETE.		BEST.		VOCALS TR. 1&2
4T TO 4T. ON		E 67496 4T.		8	COMPLETE.		BEST.		
			SI	1	COMPLETE.				TRACK. 4. ON TAKE 8.
SOUND EFFECTS. ON		E. 69497.		1	COMPLETE.				
				2	COMPLETE.				
		(67497)							

Ref. 9864

MONO/~~STEREO~~

RECORDING SHEET

Sheet: 1 of: .... Class: POP. Overall Title 4T- MONO. Date of Session 8-2-68 Job No: 1058

ARTISTIC INFORMATION

ARTISTE(S) AND/OR CAST: BEATLES

CONDUCTOR:
ORCHESTRA:
ACCOMPANIMENT:
ART. DEPT. REP.: MR. GH MARTIN.

5"/spool. **COSTING INFORMATION**

MATERIALS USED: 0x811
SESSION BOOKED TIME: 7 – 12
SESSION ACTUAL: 10 – 12.15.
SET-UP/PLAYBACK:
ORDER NUMBER:
COMPANY: PARLO
~~STUDIO~~/CONTROL ROOM: 2
ENGINEERS: USRL

TITLES and MATRIX Nos.	AUTHOR/COMPOSER/PUBLISHER	REEL NUMBERS	FALSE STARTS	TAKE No.	TAKE DETAILS FROM	TAKE DETAILS TO	DUR.	M	REMARKS
AROUND THE UNIVERSE		E 67489 MONO control		RM1/RM2				Best	4T8

7½"/sec COPY GIVEN TO JOHN LENNON.

¾ hr clearing up.

Ref. 9864

The Beatles began recording 'Across The Universe' on 4 February 1968. Surprisingly, for a song rated so highly by its composer, an appearance on a Beatles record was delayed until the release of *Let It Be* in May 1970. For their final studio album, Phil Spector had 're-produced' 'Across The Universe' by slowing down the speed of the four-track tape – lowering the song's key by a semitone from D to D flat – and overdubbed an orchestra and choir. His grandiose production was several galaxies away from how the original arrangement of 'Across The Universe' sounded in February 1968.

There were six takes during the first session, numbered one, two and then, erroneously, four to seven. Take two, released on *Anthology 2*, features John's guitar and vocal recorded on track one of the four-track tape, swaramandala (an Indian harp) on three and acoustic guitar and tamboura on four. The last four takes were even simpler than that. **CD Six – Sessions Track 22** is take six – an entirely live performance with John singing and playing guitar and Ringo tapping a tom-tom on track four of the tape. Take seven was chosen for over-dubbing. The drone notes of a tamboura were played by George on track two and John double-tracked his vocal on three. Having decided they needed some female voices, in an unorthodox move, The Beatles invited two fans keeping watch outside the building into the warmth of the studio to sing on the chorus. In *The Beatles Book Monthly* edition for April 1968, Neil Aspinall and Mal Evans revealed The Beatles' guest singers were 'Lizzie Bravo, a 16-year old who came from Rio de Janeiro and is hoping to become an actress plus Gayleen Pease, a 17-year old who is studying for her "A" level exams this summer.'

Take seven was bounced down to another tape in a reduction mix that combined John's double-tracked vocals, guitar and tom-tom on track one and the tamboura and the singing of the teenagers on two. Now called take eight, overdubs of organ, bass and drums on tracks three and four were tried and then erased. They were replaced by an electric 'wah-wah' guitar and harmony vocals.

'Across The Universe' was mixed in mono on the day recording was completed – 8 February 1968 – with, even at this stage, sound effects of birds added to the beginning and over the fade. On 13 March 1969, this mono mix was compiled on a master tape for an EP that would also include four tracks from the *Yellow Submarine* soundtrack. Although mastered, the disc was never issued so the original mix remained unheard until the *Mono Masters* compilation was released in October 2009. When the release of the World Wildlife Fund charity album was scheduled for December 1969, two stereo mixes of 'Across The Universe' were made on 2 October. The first is without sound effects. The second mix, used on the LP, has effects and was speed-ed up, raising the key by almost a semitone to just below D sharp. This version is available on *Past Masters*. In 2003, *Let It Be… Naked* presented songs from The Beatles' final LP stripped of Phil Spector's embellishments. The sparse arrangement on the album of 'Across The Universe', running at its correct tempo in D major, brought a fourth version into the catalogue. Now, in 2018, a fifth is available.

Hey Jude

29.07.1968

The song had taken root during Paul's familiar car journey from his home in London to Kenwood, John's house in Weybridge, Surrey. 'I was usually going there to collaborate with John,' Paul explained. By June 1968, John was living with Yoko in a flat owned by Ringo in Montagu Square in central London, so this time Paul's trip to Surrey was to offer support to John's wife Cynthia and five-year-old son Julian. 'John and Cynthia were splitting up. I had known them for so long. We had hung out since John's art school days when I had a girlfriend called Dot and John had Cynthia. We used to go to parties together. I decided to pay a visit and say, "How are you doing? What's happening?"' As he drove, Paul reflected on the consequences of marital breakdown: 'I always feel sorry for kids in divorces. The adults may be fine but the kids… I always relate to their little brain spinning round in confusion, going, "Did I do this? Was it me?" Guilt is such a terrible thing. I was very used to writing songs on my way to Kenwood. This time I started with the idea "Hey Jules", which was Julian, "don't make it bad, take a sad song and make it better." I knew it was not going to be easy for him.'

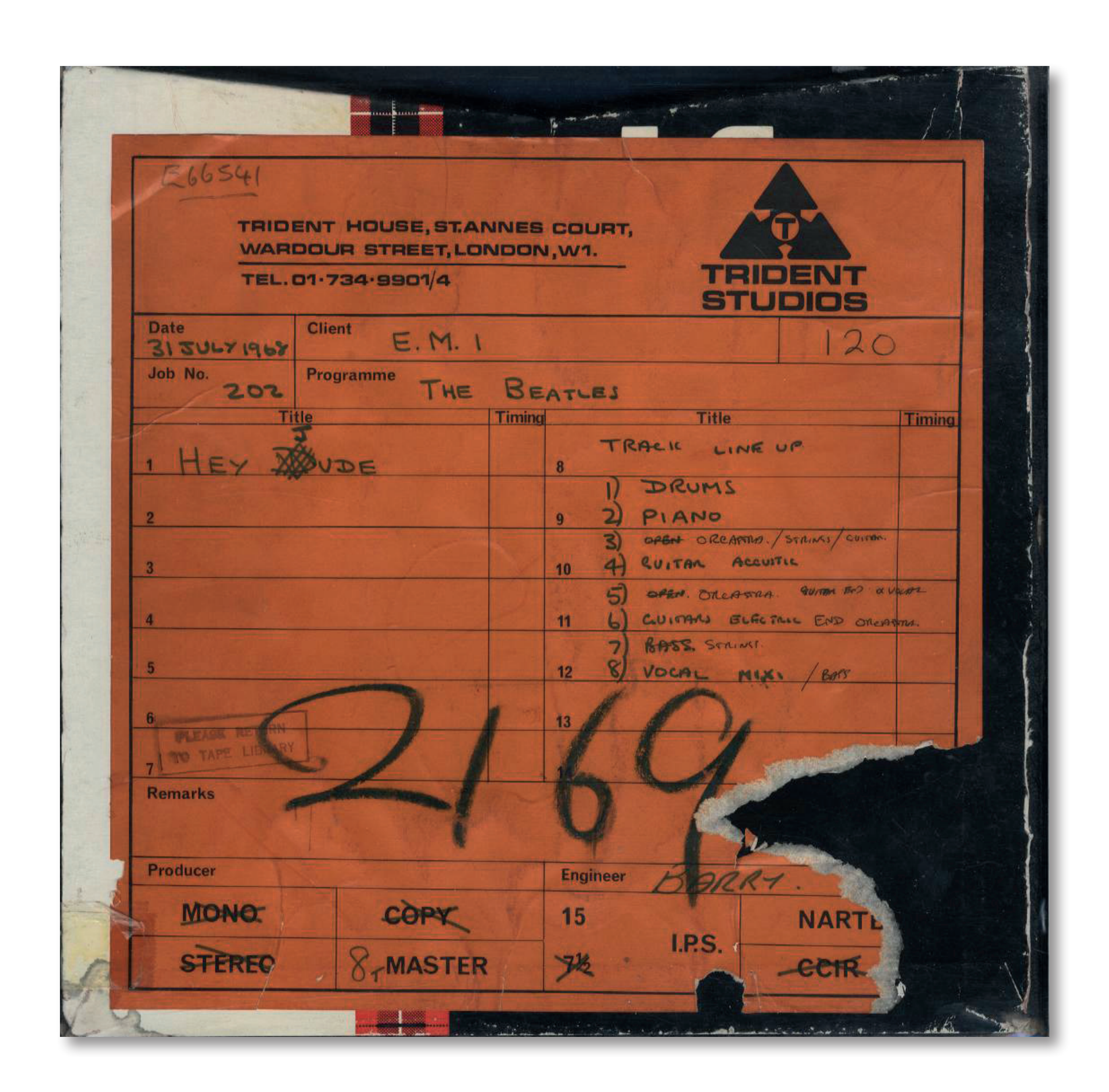
The song evolved: Jules became Jude and the message of solace for Julian broadened to a universal theme of empathy. Speaking in September 1968, a few weeks after the release of 'Hey Jude', John observed, 'When Paul first played me the little tape he'd made of it, I took it very personally. "Ah, it's me!" I said, "It's me." He says, "No, it's me." I said, "We're going through the same bit." So we all are.'

Although Paul had written 'Hey Jude' alone, he points out that even when he and John composed separately, the process of playing a song for each other might affect its completion. 'Quite a lot of songs were written on my own and then I'd check them out with John; or he'd write "Strawberry Fields Forever", for example, and check it out with me. I was playing him the little tape I'd made of "Hey Jude", and it went "the movement you need is on your shoulder" and I looked over and said, "I'll be fixing that line. Don't worry." Afterwards, he said, "You're kidding about fixing that line, aren't you? That's probably the best line in it. I know what it means. I want to keep that." When someone you respect is that definite about it, you don't need to ask any more questions after that. You say, "You're right!"'

On 30 June 1968, a month before The Beatles began to record 'Hey Jude', the song was given an impromptu first public performance in a small Bedfordshire village called Harrold. Returning from a recording session with The Black Dyke Mills Band near Bradford in Yorkshire, Paul and some friends decided to break their journey. They chose to stop in Harrold, simply because they liked its name. 'It was the essence of England on a Sunday evening,' Derek Taylor remembered. 'In the pub, Paul got to a piano and a sing-song was started – he'd always been good at that sort of thing – and he said, "Well, here's a new one," and he played "Hey Jude". Taught them how it went: "Na, na, na, na, na, na, naa…" so they were all at it! That was the premiere of "Hey Jude". It was an unbelievably wonderful night. We didn't leave there until dawn was coming up. It was a *Brigadoon* kind of a thing. It was almost as if it were a place that hadn't existed unless it was visited. It was the visiting that made it exist.'

Paul had produced The Black Dyke Mills Band performing his tune 'Thingumybob' and 'Yellow Submarine' for a new venture The Beatles had launched. The first four singles on their own Apple Records were released in the UK on 30 August 1968. 'Thingumybob' was given the catalogue number APPLE 4, 'Sour Milk Sea' by Jackie Lomax was assigned APPLE 3 and 'Those Were The Days' by Mary Hopkin was designated APPLE 2. Although 'Hey Jude' was pressed with an Apple label, for contractual reasons it did not have APPLE 1 printed upon it. The British single was given a Parlophone catalogue number – R 5722.

This was a spectacular way to introduce Apple. The bestselling record of the year in the UK, 'Hey Jude' was replaced at number one by 'Those Were The Days'. In the USA, 'Hey Jude' topped the chart for nine weeks, with Mary Hopkin's record at number two for a third of that time. More than that, though, 'Hey Jude' has continued to be a


E66541
TRIDENT HOUSE, ST.ANNES COURT,
WARDOUR STREET, LONDON, W1.
TEL. 01·734·9901/4
TRIDENT
STUDIOS
Date
31 JULY 1968
Client
E.M.I
120
Job No.
202
Programme
THE BEATLES
Title
Timing
Title
Timing
1 HEY JUDE
2
3
4
5
6
7
8 TRACK LINE UP
1) DRUMS
9 2) PIANO
3) ORCASTRA. / STRINGS / GUITAR.
10 4) GUITAR ACCUSTIC
5) ORCASTRA.
11 6) GUITAR ELECTRIC END ORCASTRA.
7) BASS. STRINGS
12 8) VOCAL
13
PLEASE RETURN TO TAPE LIBRARY
2169
Remarks
Producer
Engineer
BARRY.
MONO
COPY
15
NARTB
STEREO
8T MASTER
7½
I.P.S.
CCIR

song of solace for countless millions for over 50 years. Paul's uncanny gift for melody is embodied by the song. Over a simple musical structure – it uses just four chords – he plucked an immortal melody out of the air. 'One of his masterpieces,' John commented in 1980.

Recorded during the session for 'Hey Jude' on 30 July 1968:

St. Louis Blues
Paul broke into a verse of this W.C. Handy composition first published in 1914. One of the most performed songs of the 20th century, it is associated with landmark recordings by Bessie Smith and Louis Armstrong. In 1958, Nat 'King' Cole starred as W.C. Handy in a film based on the composer's life called *St. Louis Blues*.

Recording details:
Recorded: 29 and 30 July 1968 – Studio Two, Abbey Road: 31 July and 1 August 1968 – Trident Studios
Mono Mix: 8 August 1968 – *Stereo Mix:* 5 December 1969

Paul: lead vocal, piano, bass
John: backing vocal, acoustic guitar,
George: backing vocal, electric guitar, tambourine
Ringo: backing vocal, drums

Additional Instruments:
Ten violins, three violas, three cellos, two double basses, two flutes, two clarinets, contrabass clarinet, bassoon, contrabassoon, four trumpets, four trombones, two French horns, one percussionist
All (except one): backing vocals and handclaps

Why has the music made by The Beatles transcended time and place for over 50 years? Examining the recording of 'Hey Jude' reveals one of the main reasons. In the studio, they could take a great song and make it better. Four days of sessions were devoted to 'Hey Jude', which was always destined to be the group's second single of 1968. The plan was to make a live group performance at EMI, then transfer the four recorded tracks to an eight-track tape for further embellishment at the independent studio Trident. EMI had not brought an eight-track machine into service at this point. As an orchestral overdub was planned for the second half of 'Hey Jude', the extra tracks available at Trident would avoid the compromises caused by bouncing down four-track tapes to free up space.

On Sunday 28 July, The Beatles were photographed in a variety of London locations for what has become known as the 'Mad Day Out'. The next day, six takes of 'Hey Jude' were logged – three were complete performances. Paul's vocal was recorded on track one; piano playing by Paul is on track two; John strumming acoustic guitar and George playing electric lead guitar are on three; Ringo's drumming is on four. CD Five – Sessions Track 3 is take one. Take two, faded out at 4'17", is on *Anthology 3*. There was a reference to Elvis Presley's 'Milk Cowblues Boogie' – also quoted during the September 'Helter Skelter' session – when John stopped take three of 'Hey Jude' with the words: 'Hold it, Paul. That don't move me!'

The following day, 30 July, The Beatles were filmed in Studio Two for *Music!*, a documentary film made for the National Music Council of Great Britain. Two segments in the finished film from this second session for 'Hey Jude' – lasting 2'32" and 3'05" – were included in the final cut. The documentary was shown on TV in the USA on 22 February 1970. In the UK, cinemagoers saw it in October 1969 as an accompanying film for *The Producers* directed by Mel Brooks. The evening began with take seven, with drums recorded on track one; piano and acoustic guitar on two; electric guitar on three and vocals on four. From take eight onwards, George's guitar was absent and John's acoustic guitar had moved to be on its own on track three. 'There came a time,' George recalled in *The Beatles Anthology*, 'where Paul had fixed an idea in his brain as how to record one of his songs.' 'We were joking when we made the *Anthology*,' Paul remembers. 'I was saying, "I realise I was a bossy git." And George said, "Oh no, Paul, you never did anything like that!" With a touch of irony in his voice, because obviously I did. Looking back, I think, Oh, shit, of course you'd be offended.'

Nevertheless, the *Music!* footage shows George sitting in the control room, singing along and encouraging the others with some good-natured banter: 'And two crates of beer if you do "Twist And Shout",' he joked on the talkback microphone. John responded: '"Boys"!' [The Shirelles B-side they covered on *Please Please Me*] This exchange was after a diversion into 'St. Louis Blues' (CD Five – Sessions Track 4) before take 17. Following an impromptu improvisation of the Ray Charles hit 'Don't Let The Sun Catch You Crying', the performance for take 23 was judged the best of the day and given two reduction mixes with acoustic guitar and piano combined on track two. This final Abbey Road take was transferred to an eight-track tape at Trident Studios on 31 July. However, it was decided to record the song again. It was during this day that Paul's original line 'She has found you now go and get her' was altered to 'You have found her now go and get her'. During the verses, George played a few linking passages on electric guitar.

A 36-piece orchestra just about squeezed into the basement studio at Trident for the final day of recording. 'We had to put the trombones at the very front so that they didn't poke anyone in the back,' Chris Thomas remembers. The orchestral players were asked to sing the 'na na na naa' coda and clap along; all did except for one killjoy, apparently. Some tracks of the eight-track tape that were used for instruments at the beginning of the song – such as two electric guitars on track six – were later used to record the orchestra from when it plays at 3'48". The eight tracks on the tape of take one recorded at Trident consist of: track one: drums; two: piano; three: vocal and electric guitar in the first section then strings, clarinets, and brass; four: John's acoustic guitar; five: piano, electric guitar, community singing and handclaps; six: two electric guitars then brass instruments and strings; seven: bass guitar; eight: lead vocal, backing vocals, tambourine and community singing.

'Hey Jude' was mixed at Trident, because Abbey Road did not have an operational eight-track machine. Unusually, a stereo mix was made which was folded down into mono. Ken Scott recalls that when the mono mix was played at Abbey Road, 'It sounded as if there were curtains in front of the speaker.' Consequently, Ken added EQ to make it brighter. It was discovered, in time for later Beatles recordings at Trident, that part of the problem was due to the studio's American tape machines being set to the US equalisation curve NAB, while Abbey Road used the UK standard CCIR. To resolve this in the future, Trident tapes were always copied at Abbey Road with the correct NAB setting during playback.

After four days of work, The Beatles had completed what Paul describes with some understatement as 'a pretty good record'. 'It felt good recording it,' Ringo remembers. 'We put it down a couple of times – trying to get it right – and like everything else, it just clicked. That's how it should be.'

MONO/STEREO -4TRACK

RECORDING SHEET

Sheet : 1 of : 1 Class : POP Overall Title 4 TRACK Date of Session 07 AUGUST 1968 Job No : 1069

ARTISTIC INFORMATION				COSTING INFORMATION			
ARTISTE(S) AND/OR CAST	THE BEATLES	CONDUCTOR		MATERIALS USED	3x8" (4TRACK)	ORDER NUMBER	
		ORCHESTRA		SESSION BOOKED TIME	7-10	COMPANY	
		ACCOMPANIMENT		SESSION ACTUAL	8.45-5.30	STUDIO/CONTROL ROOM	2-2
		ART. DEPT. REP.	MR G. MARTIN.	SET-UP/PLAYBACK	½	ENGINEERS	KS.-J.S.

TITLES and MATRIX Nos.	AUTHOR/COMPOSER/ PUBLISHER	REEL NUMBERS	FALSE STARTS	TAKE No.	TAKE DETAILS FROM	TAKE DETAILS TO	DUR.	M	REMARKS
NOT GUILTY		E69822	1-4	5	EDIT	PIECE			INTRO
		(4TRACK)	6-12	13	—	〃 —			INTRO
			14-18						
NOT GUILTY.		E69824	19-25	26	COMP	LETE.	3.01		
		(4TRACK)	27-29	30	—	〃 —	2.29		
			31	32	—	〃 —	3.15		
NOT GUILTY.		E69825	33-35	36	—	〃 —	2.14		
		(4TRACK)	37-40	41	—	〃 —	3.25		
			42-46						

Ref. 9864

MONO

MONO/STEREO -4TRACK

RECORDING SHEET

Sheet : 1 of : 1 Class : POP. Overall Title TAPE → TAPE + 4TRACK. Date of Session 08 AUGUST 1968 Job No : 1069

ARTISTIC INFORMATION				COSTING INFORMATION			
ARTISTE(S) AND/OR CAST	THE BEATLES	CONDUCTOR		MATERIALS USED (1x8" (¼") 1x7" PLASTIC SPOOL.)	4x8" (4TRACK)	ORDER NUMBER	
		ORCHESTRA		SESSION BOOKED TIME	7-10	COMPANY	
		ACCOMPANIMENT		SESSION ACTUAL	6.40-6.30.	STUDIO/CONTROL ROOM	2-2
		ART. DEPT. REP.	MR G. MARTIN.	SET-UP/PLAYBACK	½	ENGINEERS	KS.-JS.

TITLES and MATRIX Nos.	AUTHOR/COMPOSER/ PUBLISHER	REEL NUMBERS	FALSE STARTS	TAKE No.	TAKE DETAILS FROM	TAKE DETAILS TO	DUR.	M	REMARKS
HEY JUDE.		E69823		2	COMP	LETE.	7.11		
		(CONT)		3	—	〃 —	7.11		
				4	—	〃 —	7.11		BEST
NOT GUILTY		E69827	47-49	50	—	〃 —	2.48		
		(4TRACK)	51-52	53	—	〃 —	2.50		
			54-56	57	—	〃 —	2.50		
			58-60	61	—	〃 —	3.07		
				62	—	〃 —	3.10		
NOT GUILTY		E69828	63	64	—	〃 —	3.15		
		(4TRACK)	65-68	69	—	〃 —	2.55		
			70-73	74	—	〃 —	3.03		
			75	76	—	〃 —	2.58		
			77-79						
NOT GUILTY		E69829	80-90	91	—	〃 —	4.05		
		(4TRACK)	92	93	—	〃 —	3.00		
			94-96	97	—	〃 —	4.16.		
NOT GUILTY		E69830		98	—	〃 —	4.16		
		(4TRACK)		99	—	〃 —	4.16		BEST
				100	—	〃 —	4.16		
				101	—	〃 —	4.16		
REVELUTION Nº2		E69831		5	—	〃 —		*	CUT OUT AND TAKEN
HEY JUDE.		(½")		5	—	〃 —		*	AWAY BY MR G. MARTIN.

Ref. 9864

Not Guilty

07.08.1968

George's song was included in the collection of demos put together at his house in Esher. The words he sang in May 1968 remained the same for The Beatles' version made at Abbey Road in August and, because it was not released by the group at the time, in the new recording of 'Not Guilty' he included on his 1979 solo album, *George Harrison*. Confusingly, when the original studio version by The Beatles was first released in 1996 on *Anthology 3*, the first line of the second verse ('for being on your street – getting underneath your feet') had been edited out, along with a guitar solo between the two verses. The complete version has been restored for this release.

Interviewed about the song when promoting *George Harrison*, George acknowledged that 'the lyrics are a bit passé – all about upsetting "Apple carts" and stuff – but it's a bit about what was happening at the time. "Not guilty for getting in your way, while you're trying to steal the day" – which was me trying to get a space.' His song also referred to The Beatles' recent experience in India: 'I said I wasn't guilty of leading them astray in our going to Rishikesh to see the Maharishi – "Not guilty … for leading you astray / On the road to Mandalay." I was sticking up for myself.'

George was happy to discover his song when preparing in 1978 for his eponymous solo album: 'I forgot all about it until I found this old demo I'd made in the '60s. I like the tune a lot – it would make a great tune for Peggy Lee or someone.'

Recording details:
Recorded: 7, 8, 9 and 12 August 1968 – Studio Two, Abbey Road
Mono Mix: 12 October 1968 –
Stereo Mix for unreleased Sessions album: 1984

George: lead vocal, guitar :
John: harpsichord *(from take 47)*; electric piano *(takes 1 to 46)* :
Paul: bass :
Ringo: drums :

From 29 July 1968 to the start of the session for 'Not Guilty' on 7 August, the focus had been entirely on recording and mixing the next Beatles single 'Hey Jude'. Work resumed on the album with 'Not Guilty', one of the acoustic recordings George had made at home for consideration in May. His song became heavier at Abbey Road. The initial line-up was: bass played by Paul (on track one); Ringo on drums (two); electric guitar played by George (three); and John playing electric piano (four). There were 46 takes in the first session, but many were false starts, breakdowns or rehearsals of different sections of the song. What was called 'the waltz bit', when the rhythm switches briefly from 4/4 to 3/4 needed careful working out. 'Without the waltz, it's easier,' George noted. 'Yeah, I always find that,' John replied. Around five in the morning, after take 41 of the instrumental backing track, John remarked, 'I don't mind if we keep doing it, but I don't think it's going anywhere.' Soon afterwards, they stopped.

In the next session, John played an acoustic harpsichord instead of electric piano. The switch of instrument had a positive effect. After take 69, John asked, 'How was that? I think that's the best so far, on average, like!' But they kept going until take 97. There were several reduction mixes of this take in which drums and bass were combined on track one and harpsichord and guitar were mixed on track two. When a third attempt at a reduction mix took the number of takes to 100, Ken Scott made a point of marking this milestone by announcing the number with tape echo on his voice! The final reduction mix – called take 102 – was given overdubs the following night.

On 9 August, more drums and a lead guitar were overdubbed. The final recording made on 12 August was George's lead vocal. According to Ken Scott, George sang in the control room. 'He wanted to do it with the speakers blasting,' he remembers, 'so that he got more of an on-stage feel.' On that night, a mono mix was made that was taken away for further listening.

'Not Guilty' did not make the final cut when 'The White Album' was sequenced in mid-October. Take 102 was eventually released in 1996 on *Anthology 3*. It had been edited and mixed 12 years earlier for the completed – but never released – *Sessions* album of previously unissued Beatles tracks. **CD Five – Sessions Track 5** is a new mix of the full-length master take. George rerecorded 'Not Guilty' in 1978 for his album *George Harrison*, released the following year. Compared to the sidelined Beatles version, it was a mellower interpretation and did not include the tricky 'waltz bit'.

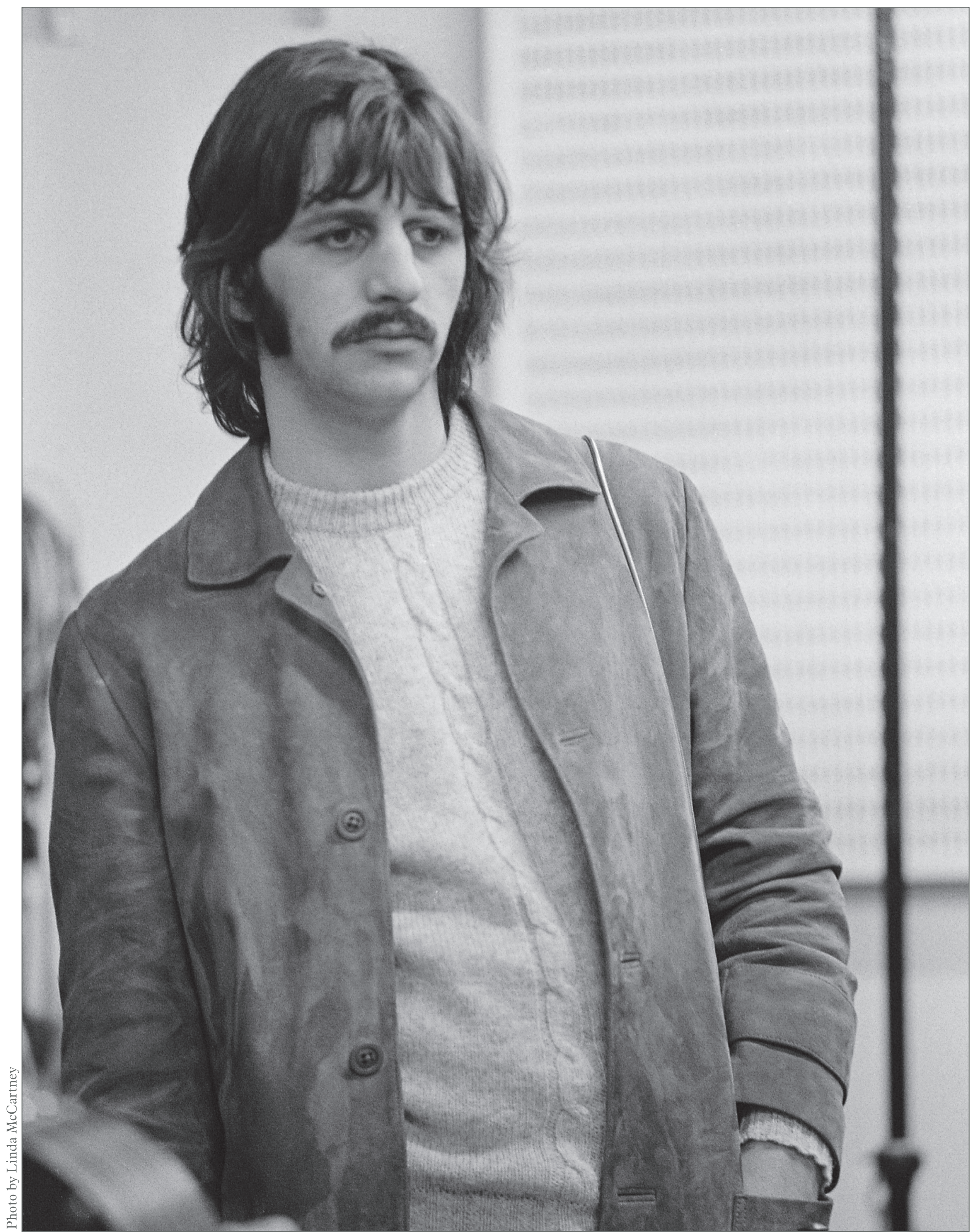
What's The New Mary Jane

14.08.1968

The song was cooked up in Rishikesh and so, appropriately, includes a reference to chapattis, an Indian flatbread. John also whizzes around the world in his lyric by including an African Queen, spaghetti, Mongolian lamb, a Patagonian pancake and Mary Jane 'jumping as Mexican bean to make that her body more thin'. Of course, Mary Jane is a vernacular term for marijuana, which might explain the nonsensical flow of words and the lightheaded mood of the song. Furthermore, the heady brew of children's stories served up in 'Cry Baby Cry' and 'The Continuing Story Of Bungalow Bill' may also have infused John's thinking when writing this song. In several interviews, John mentioned how much he enjoyed reading classic children's books by Lewis Carroll, Edward Lear and Richmal Crompton. When writing 'What's The New Mary Jane', perhaps he recalled a recurring couplet from the poem 'Rice Pudding' in A.A. Milne's *When We Were Young*: 'What is the matter with Mary Jane? She's perfectly well, and she hasn't had a pain.'

There is another madcap element within the song. John and George were fans of the comedy pop album *Confections Of Love* released in 1967 by Brute Force (Stephen Friedland). The LP featured a mock doo-wop song called 'Brute's Party'. Could John be mimicking the way Brute Force sang 'party' with an exaggerated American drawl? A year later, when no other company would touch with a barge pole the moving tale of 'The King Of Fuh' by Brute Force, Apple Records took up the cause. George supervised a session to overdub strings on Brute's opus on 10 January 1969 – the day he had walked out of The Beatles' rehearsals at Twickenham Film Studios. George's diary entry for the day is a classic of wry understatement: 'rehearsed until lunch time – left the Beatles – went home and in the evening did King of Fuh at Trident Studio.'

Despite being demoed at Esher and recorded at Abbey Road, 'What's The New Mary Jane' was excluded from 'The White Album'. A year later, a plan was hatched to issue it as a single credited to the Plastic Ono Band with another quirky Beatles recording – 'You Know My Name (Look Up The Number)' – on the flip-side. However, the record never escaped into the shops. 'What's The New Mary Jane' eventually secured its first official exposure on the 1996 compilation *Anthology 3*.


Photo by Linda McCartney

Recording details:
Recorded: 14 August 1968 – Studio Three, Abbey Road
First unreleased Mono Mix: 14 August 1968 –
First unreleased Stereo Mix: 11 September 1969

John: lead vocal, piano :
George: guitar :

Yoko: vocal
Yoko Ono and Mal Evans: tambourine, hand bell, ripping paper percussion, vibraphone, football rattle, Swanee whistle, accordion

'Let's hear it before we all get taken away!' John says at the end of the final studio take of 'What's The New Mary Jane'. Remixed and edited for *Anthology 3*, that take – the fourth of the evening – had elongated a fairly brief song to a duration of over six minutes. After following the structure of the demo, the performance was then cut adrift to float where it pleased. Tossed about in the last four minutes are random noises made by The Beatles' assistant Mal Evans and Yoko Ono on an assortment of unusual instruments. The voices of Yoko and John wailing and screaming are heard drenched in tape echo. To use the vernacular of the time, the last part was a 'freak out'.

CD Five – Sessions Track 8 is the much simpler and shorter first take of the evening. John's voice was recorded on track four. His piano playing and George's guitar were mixed together on track one. They were clearly having fun.

Esher Demos

Not recorded during Sessions for *The Beatles*

Sour Milk Sea

Recorded as a demo in Esher, George's song was soon diverted from being a possible Beatles track to become the first single on Apple Records by Jackie Lomax. The singer was a friend of The Beatles, who had played in the Mersey group The Undertakers in the early 1960s. In 1967, he was signed to the music publishing division of Apple. 'I thought I was writing songs for other artists,' Jackie remembered. 'But then George heard them, and he said, "I'm going to India, but when I come back do you want to do an album, and I'll produce it?"' His version of 'Sour Milk Sea' was recorded in the last week of June 1968, when 'The White Album' sessions had produced just four songs by this point. Along with Nicky Hopkins and Eric Clapton, all The Beatles, except John, appear on Jackie's recording.

He remembered that 'George told me that according to these Sanskrit texts, the Earth goes through a transition every 26,000 years, and then goes through a fallow period called Sour Milk Sea. What good is a sour milk sea to anybody, right?' In his book *I Me Mine*, George succinctly explained his adoption of the title of a picture from Tantric art: '"Sour Milk Sea" was the idea of – if you're in the shit, don't go around moaning about it: do something about it.' Written in Rishikesh, George revealed his song was 'really about meditation' and there are references to the benefits of this technique, for example, 'In no time at all it makes you more aware, Very simple process takes you there.'

When the first four singles on the Apple label were released together in the UK in August 1968, 'Sour Milk Sea' was in that batch with the catalogue number APPLE 3. 'It came on like gangbusters on anybody's radio,' Jackie recalled. Inexplicably, the single did not receive the commercial success it deserved.

Junk

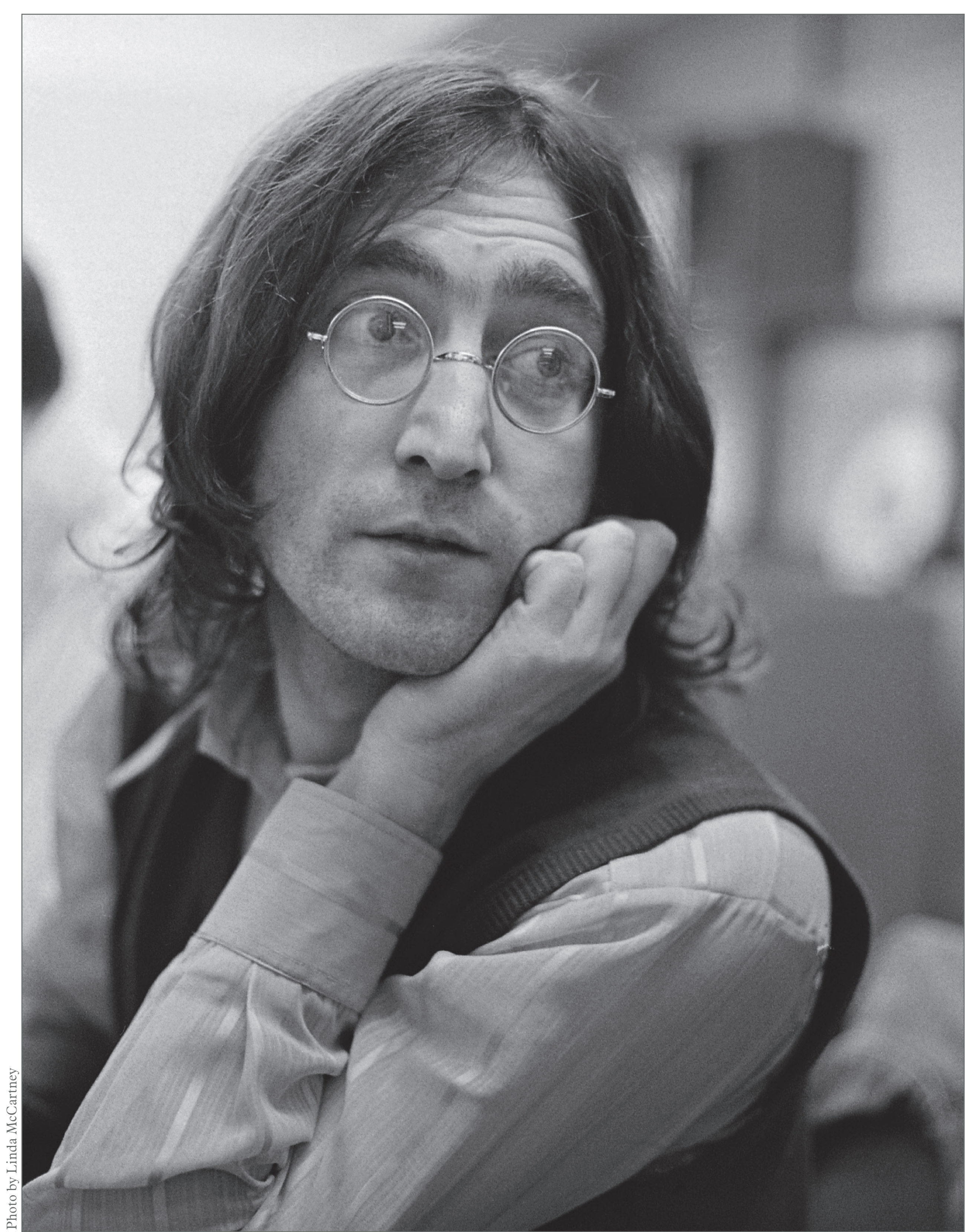
An early draft of the words is written in Paul's notebook of 'Spring Songs Rishikesh 1968'. The demo version follows that sketch, with no third verse nor the words 'sentimental jamboree' yet written. Surprisingly, given its beautiful melody, 'Junk' was not recorded during the sessions for 'The White Album' in 1968 and appears never to have been considered for the group's final albums *Abbey Road* and *Let It Be*.

The completed song was eventually released in April 1970 on Paul's first solo album *McCartney*. That LP also featured an instrumental version called 'Singalong Junk' that was memorably heard on the soundtrack of Cameron Crowe's 1996 movie *Jerry Maguire*. Three years later, in a string arrangement played by the Lorna Mar Quartet, 'Junk' opened Paul's album for the EMI Classics label called *Working Classical*. It was released just two weeks after his collection of mostly rock 'n' roll covers, *Run Devil Run*. 'I enjoy the fact that I can work both ways,' he commented in 1999. 'I'm always working class. I'm always from Liverpool and my roots are always in rock 'n' roll – but I like the odd cello.'

Child Of Nature

'We met for 90-minute lectures at 3.30pm and 8.30pm each day,' Mal Evans wrote in *The Beatles Monthly Book*. 'People would recount their meditation experiences and Maharishi would explain the causes of the sensations and thoughts we had.' John and Paul each wrote a song inspired by one of Maharishi's lectures about nature. Paul's 'Mother Nature's Son' did not refer to the circumstances in which it was written; in contrast, John's words were specific about the geographical location: 'On the road to Rishikesh … Underneath the mountain ranges'. Maharishi's 'Academy of Transcendental Meditation' was built on a plateau 150 feet above the River Ganges with the Himalayas towering above it.

'Child Of Nature' was one of the acoustic demos recorded at George's house in May 1968, but it was never attempted during the sessions at Abbey Road for *The Beatles*. John and George returned to it on 2 January 1969, the first day of the *Get Back / Let It Be* rehearsals at Twickenham Film Studios and the whole group ran through it three weeks later, on 24 January, in the Apple Studio. By this time, 'I was dreaming more or less' had been changed to 'I was dreaming of the past'. 'I never did anything with it,' John recalled. 'But I always liked the melody. The words were silly, anyway. I sang it to Yoko, Phil Spector and a few people and they always winced. I decided to change it – and, with Yoko's help, I did.' John used the tune of 'Child Of Nature' for 'Jealous Guy', but retained only the idea of dreaming when he wrote a new set of words.


Photo by Linda McCartney

Mean Mr. Mustard

This is another example of a song by John being triggered by a bizarre story he had noticed in print: 'I'd read somewhere in the newspaper about this mean guy who hid five-pound notes, not up his nose but somewhere else…' The demo from May 1968 includes an experimental chorus – 'Hey, Mean Mr. Mustard, such a dirty, dirty…'. That idea did not make it into the brief version The Beatles eventually performed in the studio, not during sessions for 'The White Album', but a year later when recording *Abbey Road*.

On side two of that album, released in September 1969, 'Mean Mr. Mustard' is part of what became known as 'The Long One'. As Ringo explained, the idea of a medley was born out of necessity: 'John and Paul had various bits, and so we recorded them and put them together. A lot of work went into it.' Paul enthusiastically embraced the concept. 'It gave the second side a sort of operatic structure, which was quite nice because it got rid of all these songs in a good way.' There was one word change to link 'Mean Mr. Mustard' with another song demoed in May 1968, 'Polythene Pam': 'Originally, it was "his sister Shirley",' John pointed out. 'I changed it to Pam to make it sound like it had something to do with it.'

Polythene Pam

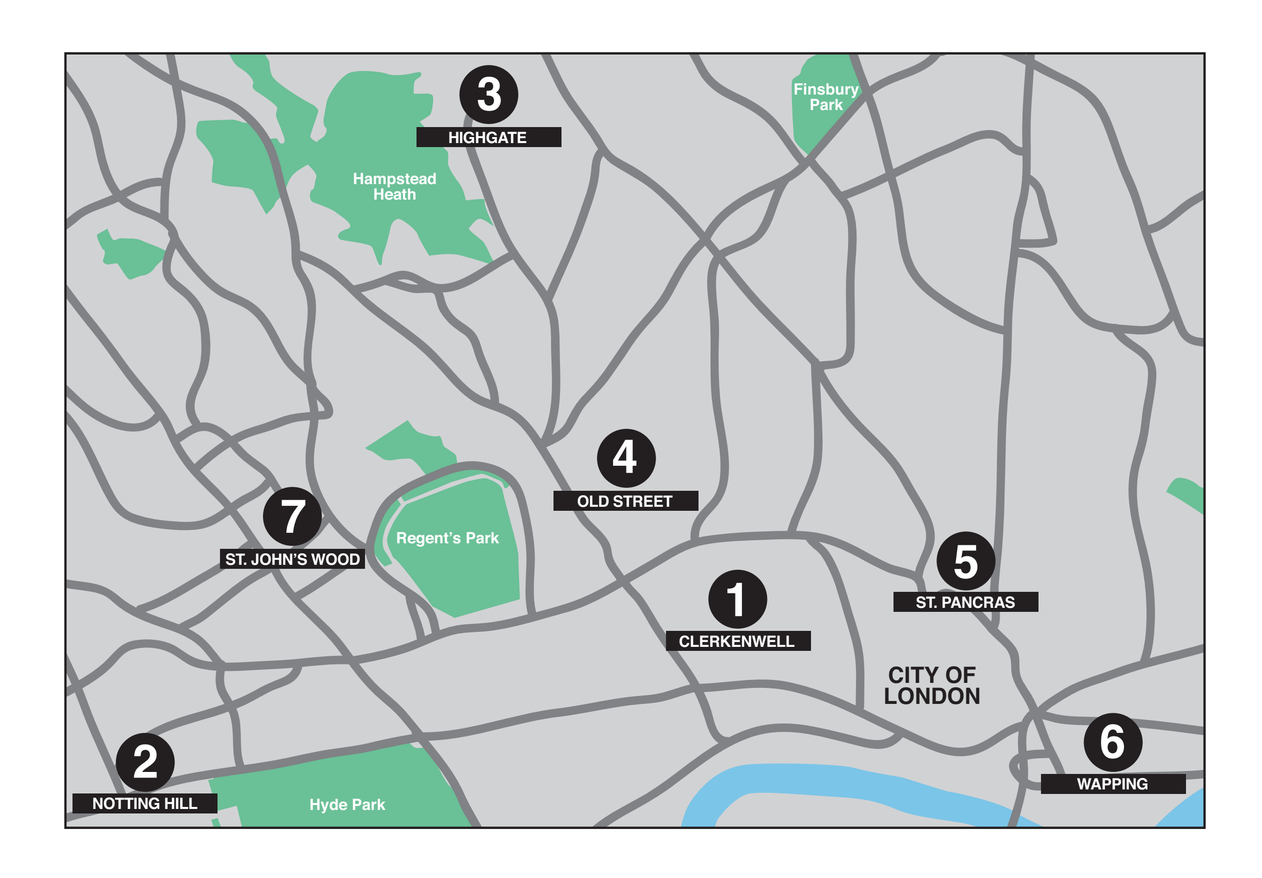
The powerful rhythmic chords played on acoustic guitar in the demo are reminiscent of the rock 'n' roll era. 'That's another half a song I wrote in India,' John remembered. 'It's a bit like everything … you know, "Not Fade Away" [by The Crickets] and "Summertime Blues" [by Eddie Cochran].' John revealed the inspiration for the words was 'me remembering a little event with a woman and a man who was England's answer to Allen Ginsberg, who gave us our first exposure.' That man was Royston Ellis, a Liverpool beat poet that John befriended in his bohemian art school days while living in Gambier Terrace in Liverpool. The credit for 'first exposure' is because, following a night at the Jacaranda coffee bar when The Beatles accompanied Royston Ellis reciting his verses, the poet secured the group their first (albeit misspelt) namecheck in a music paper. In an article in *Record and Show Mirror*, dated 9 July 1960, writer Paul Heppel mentioned that Ellis was 'thinking of bringing down to London a Liverpool group which he considers is most in accord with his poetry. Name of the group? "*The Beetles*"!'

'Everything triggers amazing memories,' John recalled. 'I met him when we were on tour [in August 1963]. I had a girl and he had one he wanted me to meet. He said she dressed up in polythene, which she did. She didn't wear jackboots and kilt, I just sort of elaborated. Perverted sex in a polythene bag. Just looking for something to write about.' The line 'Well, it's a little absurd, but she's a nice class of bird' was left out of the version recorded for the side two medley on *Abbey Road*. The *News of the World*, mentioned in the song, was a British newspaper that titillated millions of readers with salacious tales every Sunday. Indeed, the paper would have revelled in uncovering the activities of the real-life 'Polythene Pam'.

Circles

One of the 27 demos to be considered for The Beatles' next album, 'Circles' was not officially released until its inclusion as the last track on George's solo LP *Gone Troppo*. By the later recording in 1982, George had added more words and further developed the song's theme revolving around reincarnation. Both the Esher demo and released adaptation include a verse inspired by a couplet in Chapter 56 of Lao-Tzu's *Tao Te Ching*: 'Those who know, do not speak, Those who speak, do not know.' It is a philosophical paradox along the lines of the old saying 'empty bottles make the most noise' or, as Shakespeare wrote in *As You Like It*, 'The fool doth think he is wise, but the wise man knows himself to be a fool.'

Another song George composed around this time had drawn inspiration from *Tao Te Ching*. 'The Inner Light' was written following a suggestion by Sanskrit scholar Juan Mascaró to set music to a passage from the ancient text. It explored a similar conundrum: 'For the farther one travels, the less one knows.'



The Mad Day Out locations, London

Kevin Howlett

The Mad Day Out

28.07.1968

Throughout their recording career, The Beatles had been photographed by some of the leading practitioners in the field. The cover shot for their debut LP, *Please Please Me*, was taken by Angus McBean – one of the most acclaimed British photographers of the 20th century. Subsequent albums were similarly graced by the innovative work of Robert Freeman and Robert Whitaker. In the summer of 1968, Apple's head of press, Derek Taylor, was receiving requests for new group shots of The Beatles. There was also a need for pictures to promote an imminent single, and *The Beatles Book Monthly* was eager to have new material to fill its pages. To comply with these demands, the group commissioned another renowned photographer to accompany them to seven different London locations on 28 July 1968. Don McCullin may have seemed an offbeat choice to some, because he was not known for his portraits of stars from the entertainment world. Working for the *Sunday Times* newspaper, his most recent published photos revealed in stark realism the horrors of the war in Vietnam. Several other photographers were assigned for the day, including Stephen Goldblatt, a 23-year-old photojournalist. He later became an acclaimed cinematographer, earning Academy Award nominations for his work on *The Prince of Tides* and *Batman Forever*.

The peripatetic day of photography began with shots taken in a studio on the roof of Thomson House, the *Sunday Times* building in Gray's Inn Road. A colour picture was taken there for the cover of a September edition of *Life* magazine marking the publication of The Beatles' authorised biography. With a wind machine whipping up a gale, The Beatles' hair was blown back to reveal their rarely seen foreheads. 'Their famous faces looked like the figures on Mount Rushmore,' McCullin recalled. The rest of the day was spent in contrasting locations – a theatre, a park, the dockside in Wapping – with The Beatles swapping clothes and striking poses. 'We jumped in a few cars and stopped at random all over London,' Stephen Goldblatt remembered. 'No security, no nothing. They were very lighthearted.' At St Pancras Old Church, The Beatles mingled with a crowd of people looking through iron railings. The unusual scene was used for the inside of the gatefold covers of The Beatles' compilations *1962–1966* and *1967–1970*, released in 1973.

The photographers hitched a ride to the locations and snapped away as The Beatles rushed through the quiet streets of London on that busy Sunday. The large number of photos taken and the bizarre nature of some of the images has led to the shoot being known as 'The Mad Day Out'. 'We were just hanging out,' Ringo recalled. 'Just another day in the park for the Beatle boys.' The following day, the group began recording 'Hey Jude'.



1 *(above)* : Thomson House : Clerkenwell
2 *(right)* : Mercury Theatre : Notting Hill



Photo by Stephen Goldblatt



3 *(above)* : Swain's Lane : Highgate
4 *(right)* : Roundabout : Old Street







Photos by Stephen Goldblatt

5 *(above & left)* : St. Pancras Old Church



6 *(above)* : Wapping Pier Head
7 *(right)* : Paul's garden : St. John's Wood





Paul's personal copy

Andrew Wilson

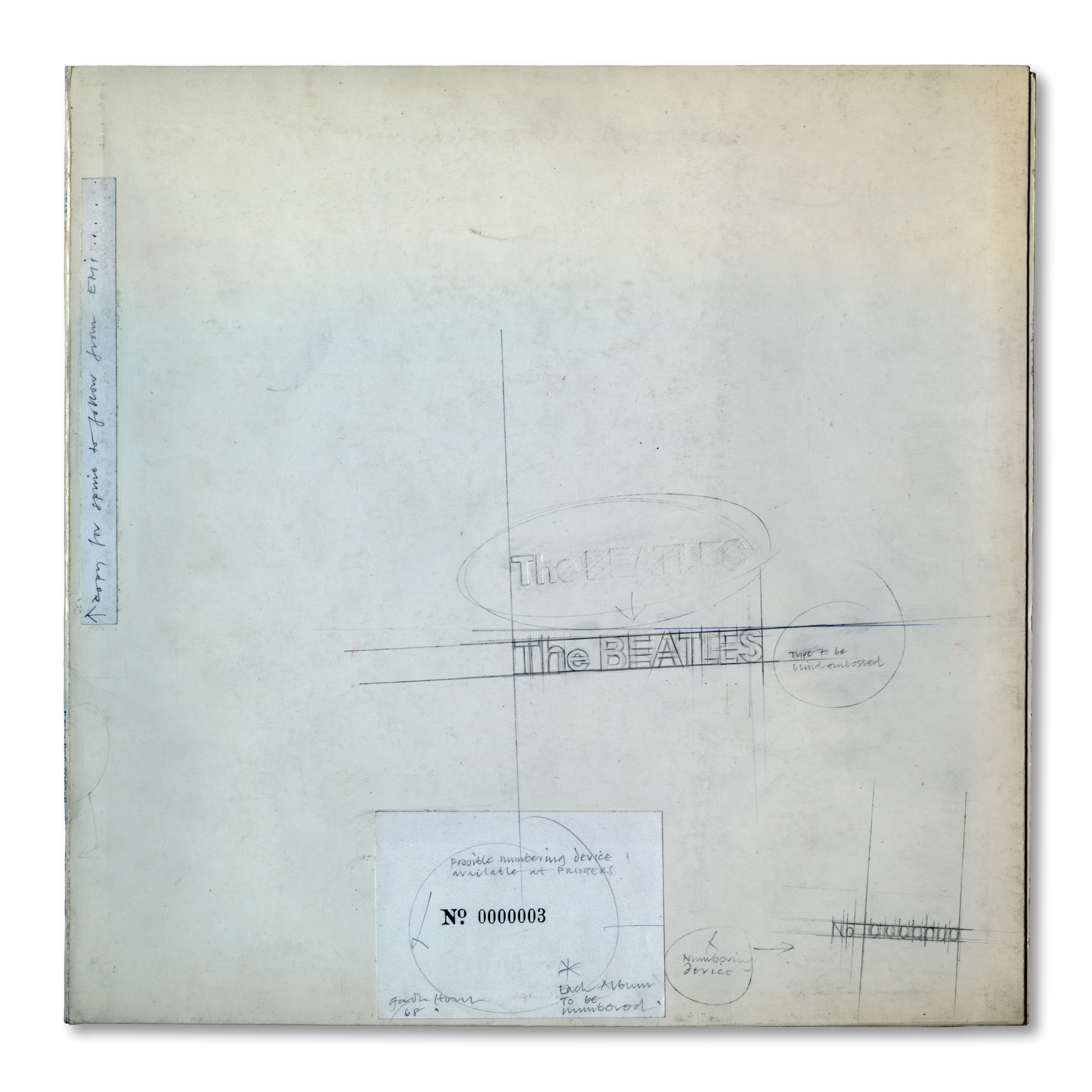
White on White

22.11.1968

The musical range of the songs in the double album *The Beatles* – for some it presented a history of pop music – reflected the character of the group in a way markedly different from the previous album's staging of an alternative Beatles as Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band. As Paul remarked in an interview for Radio Luxembourg just after it was released, 'We're not just completely one kind of group'. The 'beauty, horror, surprise, chaos, order' that Derek Jewell noted in his *Sunday Times* review were all encapsulated in the packaging for the album – a not-quite-blank screen on which to project the multi-focal diversity contained within the songs. Its directness and simplicity are the complete antithesis of the construction and artifice of *Sgt. Pepper*. Instead of a descriptive image, *The Beatles* is defined by the packaging – it gives it a name: 'The White Album'.

The packaging for the album essentially provided the means by which it would be received by the fans – and still is. The photo-collage poster, the lyric listing and the studio portraits of the band each play into the different aspects of an engagement with the music and the attachment fans feel towards the band. However, it is the plain, virtually unadorned white cover that continues to fascinate. This design was immediately apparent, as it was also unexpected, to anyone buying the record back in the winter of 1968. Why would the new album by the most famous band in the world be wrapped in what is a blank sleeve? For most journalists reviewing the album, the design was as worthy of discussion as the music, for which it effectively acted as a frame. Richard Goldstein's *New York Times* review is one example:

'By packaging 30 new songs in a plain white jacket, so sparsely decorated as to suggest censorship, the Beatles ask us to drop our preconceptions about their "evolution" and to hark back. Inside are four "candid" photos (the portrait of Paul McCartney unshaven is the most image-shattering) and a large broadside with photo-snippets on one face and printed lyrics on the other. The Beatles, who are obviously familiar with the mythic value of publicity photos, have chosen to present us with a collection of rough-hewn memorabilia. In contrast to the jackets of [*Sgt. Pepper*] and *Magical Mystery Tour*, which were ornate and ultra-formal, this is a casual, highly personalized package. In fact, examining it is like receiving a parcel with a long, rambling letter from the Beatles.'


copy for spine to follow from EMI.....
The BEATLES
The BEATLES
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Prototype

Goldstein's review of the album provides a catalogue of what resulted from the design brief that had been given to the artist Richard Hamilton, one of the key figures for the creation of pop art in Britain in the mid 1950s. By 1968, Hamilton was represented by Robert Fraser, an art dealer who was respected as much for the way he had introduced the international and British avant-garde to the London art world, as for the ease with which he moved in pop-celebrity circles, reflected in his later epithet as 'Groovy Bob'. For Paul McCartney, 'He was one of the most influential people of the London sixties scene … Robert represented to me freedom, freedom of speech, of view. Mainly he was the art eye that I most respected.' Fraser had been instrumental in the selection of artists for *Sgt. Pepper* and *The Beatles* because of his friendships with both Paul and John (in July 1968 he presented John's solo exhibition *You Are Here* at his art gallery). Hamilton's design is the very antithesis of Peter Blake and Jann Haworth's busy psychedelic retro-nostalgia, which had positioned The Beatles within a conception of popular culture that created a lineage between psychedelia and folk art. The songs, the theatrical conceit and the cover design for *Sgt. Pepper* all present the band as an identifiable unit.

The Beatles is rather different. Following the death of their manager Brian Epstein in the summer of 1967, the band appeared to shift in direction. A different approach had now to be taken to the business aspects that Epstein had previously attended, while the distinctive range of the album reflects a confidence they felt as a group in the studio to embrace the growing individuality of the band members. If changes were taking place, the choice of a white cover, however unconsciously taken, seems an apt design solution. The only graphic on the album cover is the blind-embossing of the name of the band on the front cover and, beneath this, the edition number printed on the first few million or so copies. Opening the gatefold, a grey typeface track listing for the double album was positioned opposite black-and-white photographs of the band by John Kelly. The austere simplicity of Hamilton's design was alleviated on finding within the album gatefold individual colour copies of Kelly's photographs, as well as a folded colour collage poster with lyrics printed on the reverse.

This was to be the first album released by The Beatles under their own label. At the first meeting Hamilton had at Apple's office, Paul described the parameters of the project they hoped he would take on: 'I laid out what it was we'd got,' Paul recalled in *Many Years from Now*. 'We'd got an album coming out, we hadn't really got a title for it. "I'd like you to work on the cover. We've done *Sgt. Pepper*. We've worked with a fine artist before and I just had a feeling you might be right."'

For Richard Hamilton, the cover designed by Blake and Haworth for *Sgt. Pepper* was '*the* image that people remember of the era', so when he was asked by Paul to come up with a design for their next album, his immediate response was 'I can't follow Peter Blake. I can't fill the cover with anything as exciting as he did. So I'll back out. I'll just make it white.' This was such a simple idea and may have seemed like a positive signal of new beginnings for the band after Epstein's death – a Zen-like expression of spiritual meditation a world away from commerce and as much at home in the Maharishi's ashram at Rishikesh as within the avant-garde outlook of John Cage or the Fluxus of Yoko Ono. This was a clean slate for the broad catalogue of music from 'Revolution 1' to 'Revolution 9' that made up the album.

Accounts of the album design often simplify it to suggest it was the result of this single meeting, yet the final design concept of an individually numbered plain white album sleeve containing a full-colour poster was arrived at through a number of stages. A package so pure was not so easily wrought. On Apple's side, working with Paul to achieve this were art director Jeremy Banks and photographer John Kelly. Management of the production of the cover and other aspects of the design brief for Apple and EMI was the responsibility of the artist and graphic designer Gordon House – a friend of Hamilton's, who had helped Blake on the typography of *Sgt. Pepper*. Attention was immediately given to the white cover and how it could be altered to feel less empty. Paul's excitement at the design concept was tempered by his concern that 'for what we were to people, and still are, it doesn't quite fit, we're not quite a blank space, a white wall, The Beatles.' As a result, one idea of Hamilton's was to reproduce a stain on the cover, suggestive of having left a coffee cup on the album, to make it less of a blank and to treat it as something casually lying around the home, as if it was nothing special as an object despite its content. This line of thought, stimulated by Hamilton's artist friend Dieter Roth, was deemed too flippant; however, Paul later recalled how it led to a proposal to celebrate Apple on the album cover. '"Well maybe we could bounce an apple on a bit of paper and get a smudge, a very light green smear with a little bit of pulp." But we ended up thinking that might be hard to print, because inevitably if these things do well, there are huge printings in places like Brazil and India and anything too subtle like a little apple smear can be lost, can just look like they printed it crappy. So that idea went by the wayside.'

It must have been odd producing a design for an album that had no title – and the idea of a plain white cover reflects this. Shortly after the recording sessions had started, there had been a suggestion from John to title the album 'A Doll's House', after the play by Henrik Ibsen. This idea was dropped when *Music In A Doll's House*, the debut LP by Family, was released in July 1968. As a reflection of the range of music that The Beatles' album would contain – each room a different sound – 'A Doll's House' would have been a fitting choice. One myth associated with the abandoned title is that a painting of the group in a faux-naif psychedelic style by John Byrne (otherwise known as Patrick) had been commissioned for it. This was never the case. The portrait was intended to be the frontispiece for Alan Aldridge's 1969 book *The Beatles Illustrated Lyrics*. Patrick's image was eventually used in 1980 for the cover of the compilation album *Beatles Ballads*.

Still without a title for The Beatles' double LP in 1968, this naturally became part of the design brief. For Hamilton, the cover projected a dematerialised objectification of the group, and logically by extension nothing could be so specific and yet so open as calling the album *The Beatles*. If the album cover was to be a concept, then the music was its realisation and needed no more identification than *The Beatles*. Paul related how 'Richard asked, "Has there ever been an album called *The Beatles*?" so I referred back to EMI and they said, "No. There's been *With The Beatles* and *Meet The Beatles!*, introducing The Beatles in America, but there'd never been an album called *The Beatles*." So he said, "Let's call it that"; which is the official title of "The White Album".' Having a title, which was also the name of the band, gave yet another possibility for adding to the stark white cover – the title could be blind-embossed onto the front. However, although Hamilton has written about this as part of his design – 'embossed in as seemingly casual a manner as possible' – when asked about this facet of the design shortly before he died, he admitted it was one aspect that he had been unhappy about and had been taken out of his hands, an expression of record company need to have identification of some sort between the cover and the album inside: 'There is one thing that I dislike. The words "The BEATLES" were not supposed to appear on the cover and I did not see what had been done until after the album was on the shelves. Perhaps I just didn't see the blind-embossed words at first, which were probably added, under pressure, by my friend Gordon House, who was responsible for the typesetting of the song lyrics on the back of the poster. I still believe that it is a regrettable touch of vandalism, like graffiti.'

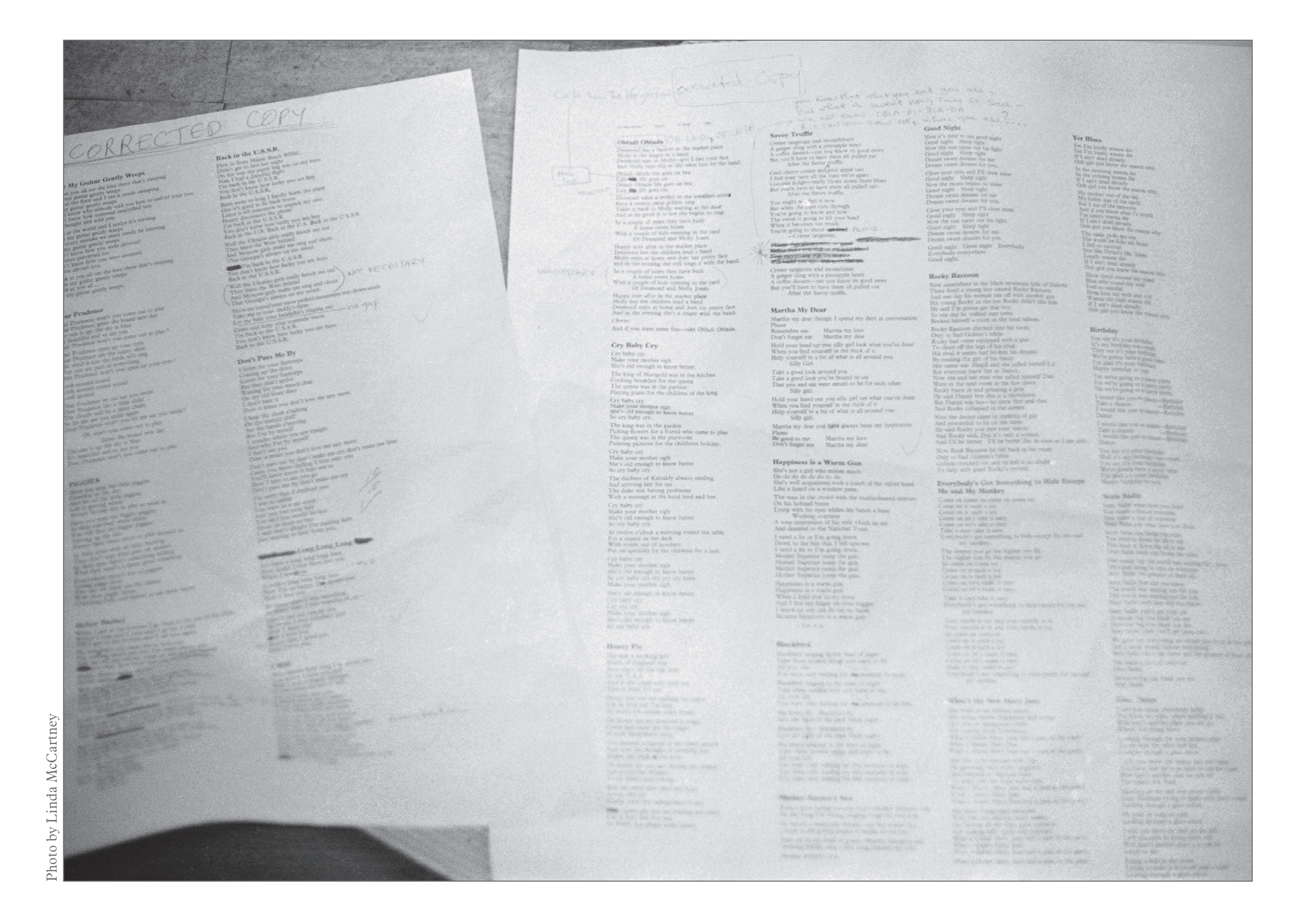


Photo by Linda McCartney

For Hamilton the addition to the cover that pulled it back from being a blank white sheet was the number applied to each cover of the early editions, somewhere in the millions. This made it something variously unique, individual and personal, as well as everyday, multiple, and universal – something that would be cherished by a fan as identifiably part of a community. In terms of a printed artwork, an edition number was about limitation, scarcity and collectability, and here the number defines the global reach of The Beatles and the popular culture that they and the fans were a part of. Hamilton described the esoteric look of the white cover and the seven-figure numbering as a furthering of ambiguity, yet it was a perfect accompaniment and graphic foil to the blankness of the cover. It was an invitation to use the cover as something to put a coffee mug on, bounce an apple on, or draw and write over, so that it crucially becomes a thing of personal attachment. Yet still it was something that EMI had to be persuaded about, as Paul relates:

'Then Richard had the idea for the numbers. He said, "Can we do it?" So I had to go and try and sell this to EMI. They said, "Can't do it." I said, "Look, records must go through something to put the shrink wrap on or to staple them. Couldn't you just have a little thing at the end of that process that hits the paper and prints a number on it? Then everyone would have a numbered copy."'

One aspect that Hamilton relished about the whole project was that it was possible to do anything – The Beatles were so important that EMI would acquiesce to pretty much any demand. A white cover with an individual number on each copy would not usually be agreed to – plain white wouldn't normally 'sell' a record. Even if the blind-embossing had to be slipped in, it was The Beatles who won any design or production argument over EMI. Gordon House remembered in particular a meeting at Apple with John, Paul,

While My Guitar Gently Weeps

I look at you all see the love there that's sleeping
While my guitar gently weeps
I look at the floor and I see it needs sweeping
Still my guitar gently weeps
I don't know why nobody told you how to unfold your love
I don't know how someone controlled you
They bought and sold you.

I look at the world and I notice it's turning
While my guitar gently weeps
With every mistake we must surely be learning
Still my guitar gently weeps
I don't know how you were diverted
You were perverted too
I don't know how you were inverted
No one alerted you.

I look at you all see the love there that's sleeping
While my guitar gently weeps
I look at you all . . .
Still my guitar gently weeps.

Dear Prudence

Dear Prudence, won't you come out to play
Dear Prudence, greet the brand new day
The sun is up, the sky is blue
It's beautiful and so are you
Dear Prudence won't you come out to play?

Dear Prudence open up your eyes
Dear Prudence see the sunny skies
The wind is low the birds will sing
That you are part of everything
Dear Prudence won't you open up your eyes?

Look around round
Look around round round
Look around

Dear Prudence let me see you smile
Dear Prudence like a little child
The clouds will be a daisy chain
So let me see you smile again
Dear Prudence won't you let me see you smile?

Oh won't you come out to play
Greet the brand new day
The sun is up the sky is blue
It's beautiful and so are you
Dear Prudence won't you come out to play.

PIGGIES

Have you seen the little piggies
Crawling in the dirt
And for all the little piggies
Life is getting worse
Always having dirt to play around in.

Have you seen the bigger piggies
In their starched white shirts
You will find the bigger piggies
Stirring up the dirt
Always have clean shirts to play around in.

In their styes with all their backing
They don't care what goes on around
In their eyes there's something lacking
What they need's a damn good whacking.

Everywhere there's lots of piggies
Living piggy lives
You can see them out for dinner
With their piggy wives
Clutching forks and knives to eat their bacon.

Helter Skelter

When I get to the bottom I go back to the top of the slide
Where I stop and I turn and I go for a ride
Till I get to the bottom and I see you again.

Do you don't you want me to love you
I'm coming down fast but I'm miles above you
Tell me tell me tell me come on tell me the answer
~~Well~~ you may be a lover but you ain't no dancer.

Helter skelter helter skelter
Helter skelter ~~yeah~~.

Will you won't you want me to make you
I'm coming down fast but don't let me break you
Tell me tell me tell me the answer
You may be a lover but you ain't no dancer.

Look out helter skelter helter skelter
Helter skelter
Look out 'cause ~~here's I come~~.

When I get to the bottom I go back to the top of the slide
And I stop and I turn and I go for a ride
And I get to the bottom and I see you again
~~(Yeah yeah yeah)~~

Well do you don't you want me to make you
I'm coming down fast but don't let me break you
Tell me tell me tell me the answer
You may be a lover but you ain't no dancer.

Look out helter skelter helter skelter
Helter skelter
Look out helter skelter
She's coming down fast
Yes she is
Yes she is.

Back in the U.S.S.R.

Flew in from Miami Beach BOAC
Didn't get to bed last night
On the way the paper bag was on my knee
Man I had a dreadful flight
I'm back in the U.S.S.R.
You don't know how lucky you are boy
Back in the U.S.S.R.

Been away so long I hardly knew the place
Gee it's good to be back home
Leave it till tomorrow to unpack my case
Honey disconnect the phone
I'm back in the U.S.S.R.
You don't know how lucky you are boy
Back in the U.S. Back in the U.S. Back in the U.S.S.R.

Well the Ukraine girls really knock me out
They leave the West behind
And Moscow girls make me sing and shout
That Georgia's always on my mind.
~~Yeah~~ I'm back in the U.S.S.R.
You don't know how lucky you are boys
Back in the U.S.S.R.

Well the Ukraine girls really knock me out
They leave the West behind
And Moscow girls make me sing and shout
That Georgia's always on my mind.

Show me round your snow peaked mountains way down south
Take me to your daddy's farm
Let me hear your balalaika's ringing out
Come and keep your comrade warm.
I'm back in the U.S.S.R.
You don't know how lucky you are boys
Back in the U.S.S.R.

Don't Pass Me By

I listen for your footsteps
Coming up the drive
Listen for your footsteps
But they don't arrive
Waiting for your knock dear
On my old front door
I don't hear it
Does it mean you don't love me any more.

I hear the clock a'ticking
On the mantel shelf
See the hands a'moving
But I'm by myself
I wonder where you are tonight
And why I'm by myself
I don't see you
Does it mean you don't love me any more.

Don't pass me by don't make me cry don't make me blue
'Cause you know darling I love only you
You'll never know it hurt me so
How I hate to see you go
Don't pass me by don't make me cry

I'm sorry that I doubted you
I was so unfair
You were in a car crash
And you lost your hair
You said you would be late
About an hour or two
I said that's alright I'm waiting here
Just waiting to hear from you.

~~It's Been a~~ Long Long Long ~~Time~~

It's been a long long long time
How could I ever have lost you
When I love you.

It took a long long long time
Now I'm so happy I've found you
How I love you

So many tears I was searching
So many tears I was wasting oh oh

Now I can see you be you
How can I ever misplace you
How I want you
~~Ooh~~ I love you
Know that I need you
Ooh I love you.

I Will

Who knows how long I've loved you
You know I love you still
Will I wait a lonely lifetime
If you want me to—I will.

For if I ever saw you
I didn't catch your name
But it never really mattered
I will always feel the same.

Love you forever and forever
Love you with all my heart
Love you whenever we're together
Love you when we're apart.

And when at last I find you
Your song will fill the air
Sing it loud so I can hear you
Make it easy to be near you
For the things you do endear you to me
~~And~~ you know I will
I will.



Photos by Rutherford Chang

George and Ringo all present with their different representatives when the details of the white sleeve were being discussed, with John interjecting: '"What we really want is a sleeve in white 'fuurr'." At the time I thought the EMI production department would certainly go absolutely mad at such an unusual but brilliant request, but it occurred to me that there was a white "flock" paper that could have been possible. Although I did make a maquette in the "fuurr" material it soon got lost and pushed aside in the rush that ensued to manufacture the quantities of albums required.' House also experienced EMI's initial reluctance to number the album and refusal to provide the thicker than usual card stock that was needed to manufacture the album cover: 'At the EMI production meeting, the EMI sales manager, marketing team and the all-important print buyer, I put forward the request for thicker white board and for each album to be individually numbered as a multiple work. After a heated discussion, with a terminating "no way", I scuttled back to report to Paul at Apple … McCartney, now angry at the rebuff just said, "Right, fuck them. Leave it to me."' After making a series of phone calls, Paul sent a telegram to the chairman of EMI. The next day, Gordon House was amazed to find the same EMI executives, 'who had now obviously been re-briefed from above', now asking what was wanted. 'The power of The Beatles ruled!'

In recent years, the cover of 'The White Album' has provided the American artist Rutherford Chang with material for a twelve-year ongoing project: he has collected almost 2,000 copies of the album, which he has presented in a sequence of exhibitions. He is drawn especially to copies of the album that have been personally adorned, written over and defaced, and that would normally be thought to be in poor condition and discarded by any self-respecting record collector. The individual number stamped consecutively on each cover reflects the degree to which each copy of the album is both unique and personal to each fan, and also something shared amongst a community defined by its worldwide release of many millions. As Chang explained to the *New York Times* in 2013, 'The serial numbers made collecting them seem natural, and the more I got, the more interesting it became. As you see, many of them are written on, and each has a story. The accumulation of the stories is part of it. But it's also about how the physical object – the record – just doesn't exist anymore.'

For the majority of copies of the album Chang has collected, the white cover had been an invitation to write and draw, testifying through these marks to both ownership and allegiance, and projecting an identity onto the album cover. This response turns the record into an artefact that exists alongside the ritual of listening to the music; not an object so much as an event. Chang's project also highlights how artist Richard Hamilton could succeed not just in using popular culture as a subject for his work but also, unlike any other pop artist, in creating a work of art that directly participated as popular culture itself. No other work of art – and the design for 'The White Album' *is* a work of art – has been quite so successful through the 20th century in that way, solely by starting out as a design commission for a particular purpose – wrapping *The Beatles*.

The white monochrome painting, whether by American artist Robert Rauschenberg in 1951 or an Achrome by Italian artist Piero Manzoni between 1957 and 1962, is about everything and nothing – it can be a statement of utmost purity or the everyday. Rauschenberg's white paintings encouraged his friend, the composer John Cage to write his composition *4' 33"* in 1952. This is not a musical composition about silence, but rather time filled by the chance yet everyday-occurring ambient sounds of daily life. It is also a provocation to the audience to make noise, to fill the gaps and answer silence with noise. Yoko Ono similarly engaged with the possibilities presented by white – not as a means of expression but as a means of projection or as a framework for an event. Her paintings, like Rauschenberg's, might offer a surface for a shadow to fall on, or with *White Chess Set* (1966) present the opportunity to play (a table, chess board and pieces, and chairs – all painted white). Much of this would have been in Hamilton's mind in suggesting a plain white cover for the album, as perhaps was John's exhibition at Fraser's gallery, given the white paintings that were included within that.

Through his friendships with Barry Miles, co-owner of the Indica gallery and bookshop, and art dealer Robert Fraser, Paul was intrigued by conceptual ideas in art, music and literature. 'It was exciting for me,' Paul remembers. 'It kind of changed from showbiz to art. I had a very rich avant-garde period, which was such a buzz, like showing my movies to Antonioni and watching films with Andy Warhol, round at my house. My place was almost like a salon, the centre of the social scene at one point.'

A shift in contemporary art had been taking place in the latter half of the 1960s, which Hamilton's design for *The Beatles* directly connects with. Conceptual art prioritised the idea over the art object and said goodbye to an approach to art that was characterised by materials, by volume, by things that are containable and defined. It democratised art, making it more available to all: how do you sell an idea? It also – like pop art – brought art closer to the everyday through its concern with context (art having previously often been rarefied and set apart from life). The art movement developed independently around the world – Yoko being one of its pioneers with her event scores and instruction pieces, many of which were collected together in her book *Grapefruit* (first published in 1964, it was republished in a popular edition in 1970). This was an art that asked questions, of itself and the world, and it encouraged the viewer into a similar activity.

Hamilton's design for *The Beatles* sits alongside this wide-ranging shift in art. The virtually blank album cover is placeless yet rooted in millions of very particular and personal sites by virtue of its numbering. It provides a medium for individual contemplation and imagination towards the music of The Beatles (the embossed name signals this identity) that is not tied to any one image but rather to the here and now of each fan holding the album and listening to the music – a map of sorts that connects the fan to the otherwise uncategorisable range of the songs on the album. Although white may signal avant-garde purity, Hamilton's design is not po-faced, but provides a frame for every fan holding and listening to the album. Nothing presents itself as a place to be filled. Nothing always signifies something.

Such a use of nothing might perhaps also seem absurdly humorous – one precedent for Hamilton being the blank map, *Ocean Chart*, that appears within Lewis Carroll's 1874 book *The Hunting of the Snark*. However, if Hamilton's work is rarely absurdist, it was often humorous in its play of opposites. With *The Beatles*, the blank conceptualisation of the cover is contrasted with the colourful and complex poster produced as a carrier for the fan's object of desire. Fundamentally, his aim for the poster was that it should reach a large audience and be as accessible as the cover design was remote. The poster, described by Hamilton as a 'give-away "print"', was the result of a fairly complex design process that took about two weeks to complete, with daily visits from Paul to his Highgate studio as this unfolded. Paul had known Hamilton's work through Fraser for at least a couple of years – he had earlier bought one of the *Solomon R Guggenheim* (1965) screenprints from the 1966 exhibition of the series that he had helped to hang at Fraser's gallery. This relationship grew over the two weeks that Hamilton took making the poster – Paul obviously relishing the close contact he had as he witnessed the poster design take shape.

Once the decision had been made about the album's titling and cover, it was the collage poster that became the prime focus of attention for Hamilton. Structurally it bears comparison with a poster print he had produced earlier in the year marking the drug bust of Robert Fraser, his dealer, with Mick Jagger and Keith Richards of The Rolling Stones. The similarity of format and approach between the two works does not seem coincidental. The source materials for *Swingeing London 67 – poster* were all the newspaper cuttings of the bust and subsequent trial that were collected by Fraser's gallery assistant. The raw material for *The Beatles* poster was a tea chest of personal photographs that Paul had sought from John, George and Ringo. Both prints also play with the idea of the large edition size: for *Swingeing London 67 – poster*, 2,000, and for *The Beatles*, in the millions. For Hamilton, this offered the possibility of reaching a markedly different public from the one that would usually be the target of a limited edition print – a public who would understand the language of the print in a different way. To the fan the poster is not, first and foremost, a fine art print but an object that acts as a surrogate image for the object of adulation. It would either be kept with the album, and perhaps studied as the music was played, or pinned up (rarely matted and framed).

The poster shows John, Paul, George and Ringo as distinct individuals. Its character and purpose is in sharp contrast to the separate portraits by John Kelly that were also given away with the album. The similarities of pose, gaze and lighting in these portraits conformed to the aesthetic of a record company's publicity department and portray them as members of band (Paul, photographed by Kelly at his home rather than the studio, appears as the most informal of the quartet). The way in which the personal and informal photographs that Paul had sourced were arranged, though seemingly casual, was determined by Hamilton primarily as a solution to crucial design issues (echoing his decision to order the collage for *Swingeing London 67 – poster* as if newspaper columns, with headline at top left). The sheet had to be folded three times in order to be inserted into the square album sleeve, and this obliged Hamilton to approach it, as he explained, as 'a series of subsidiary compositions. The top right- and left-hand square are front and back of the folder and had to stand independently as well as be a double spread together. The bottom four squares can be read independently and as a group of four. They all mate together when opened up and used as wall decoration.'

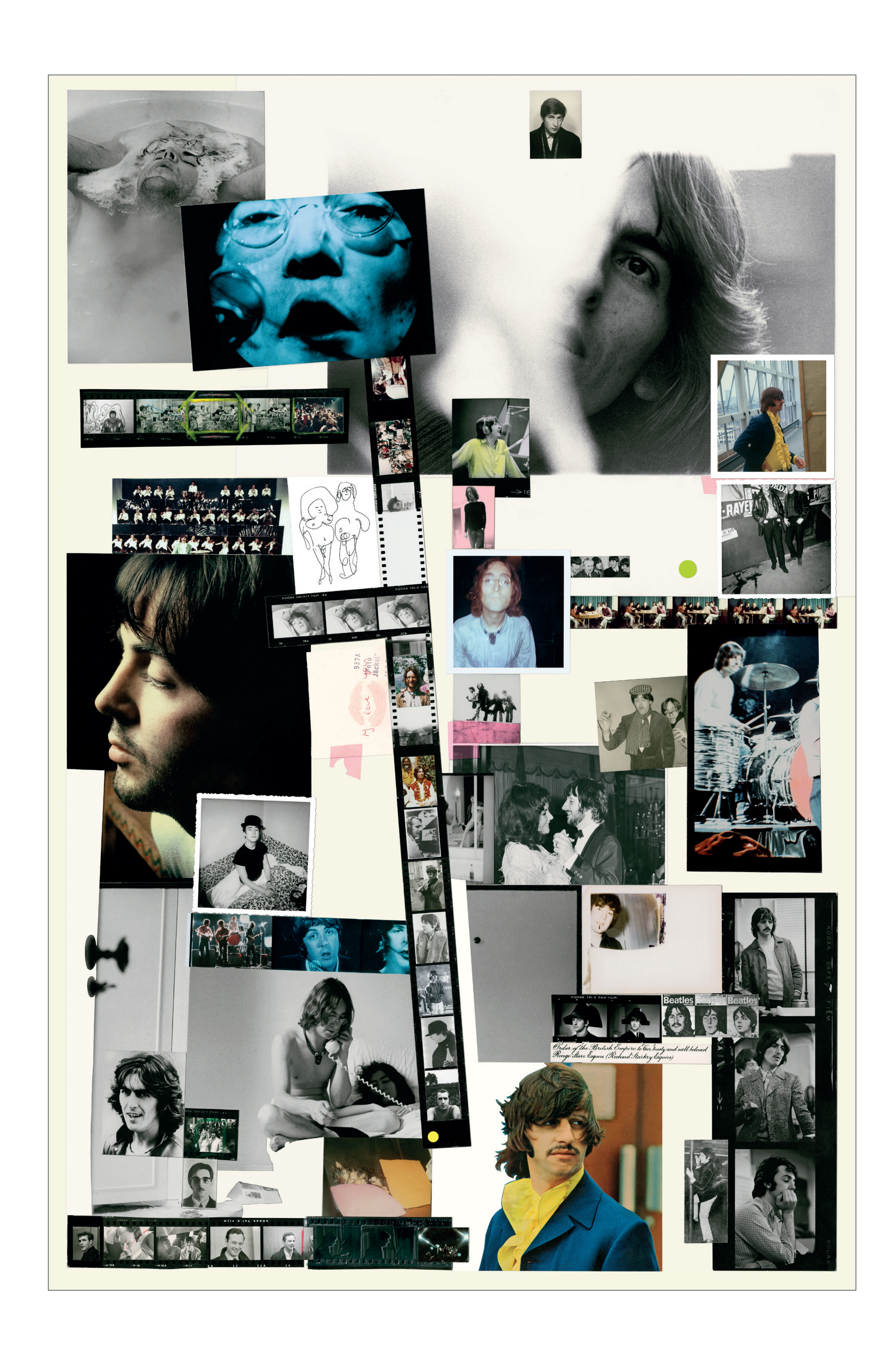
Paul described the working process to his biographer, Barry Miles. The first few days were spent sorting the images on a ten-foot-long work table, 'Ones he liked, ones he didn't like, ones that worked together, darker ones, lighter ones, themes, this against that, things he thought he might be able to use. Sorting the shapes in a painterly way.' From the long table he started to place images on a sheet of paper the same size as the poster would be. Some photographs were copied so they would be an appropriate size for the poster, others were cut through and around. Working intensely, for Paul 'the great moment was when he'd done the whole thing, when he'd filled the whole space densely with images, and got his composition right, then he took pieces of white paper that he'd cut out, and placed them strategically on the poster. And my mind couldn't comprehend that, and I went, "Wait a minute! That's going to block out a bit of picture." And he said, "Yes, but if you look at it, it's only blocking out that little bit there and you'll be able to see through this negative space. You'll be able to see through the poster. It'll give it depth." And sure enough it does. If you look at the poster you'll see the final thing he put on was four or five little bits of negative space… It was beautiful. That was cool.'

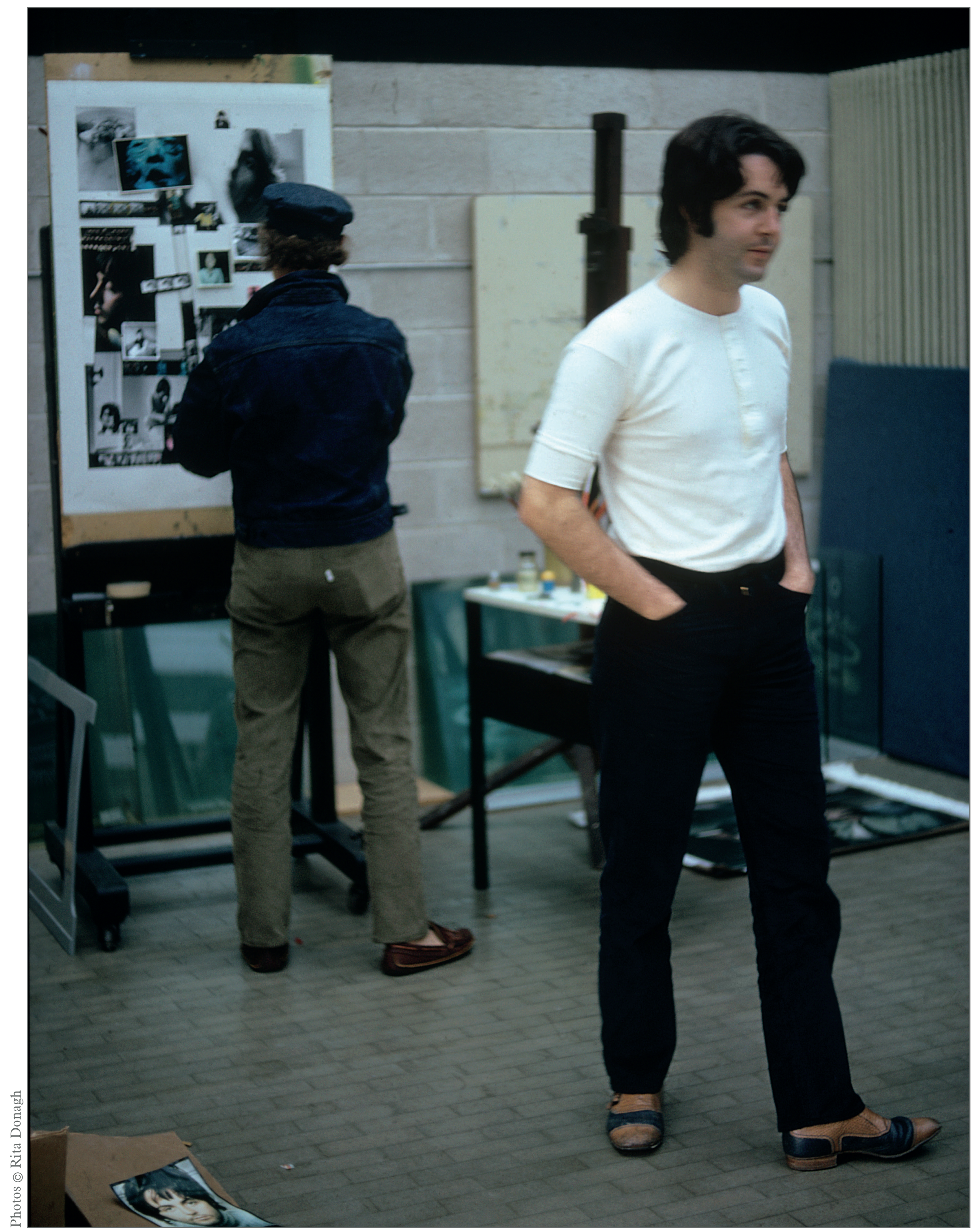
Taking the poster out of the album and unfolding it, the top left-hand panel is what is seen first, and it presents the song-writing duo of Lennon and McCartney. John is shown in blue light, singing. The image has probably been taken from a television screen, and the attendant distortion and his blue glow are conventionally unflattering. The image of John overlays the bottom right corner of an equally unusual portrait of Paul in a bathtub, his head half submerged, soapy suds giving him a halo. Running beneath the two portraits is a fabricated contact strip that includes an image of John in front of one of his wall drawings; the band in a recording session (for 'All You Need is Love') in which they are, unusually, playing brass instruments; and a colour image from the recording of 'Hey Jude' (1968). This sense of fragmentation, of hidden codes and messages, invites the fan to imagine the band members' private worlds.

The dominant image of the poster's top right panel, opposite John and Paul, is of George. This portrait casts him in a mystical, otherworldly and contemplative light, with the right side of his face obscured and out of focus. The margins of the panel show snapshot portraits of the rest of the band. Unfolded and showing all six panels, *The Beatles* is also inclusive of those working for the band and are included within faked contact strips at the base of the poster or running at a slant vertically down its centre. Here are presented Brian Epstein, Neil Aspinall (the road manager who took charge of business following Epstein's death in 1967), Mal Evans (their roadie), Derek Taylor (their publicist and press agent), George Martin (their producer) and the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi. They are given equal billing to a little pet, who is hiding among cushions in a photograph at the intersection of these two strips of images.

There are only a few collective photographs of the band: playing in recording sessions and on film; with Harold Wilson at the Variety Club Awards; and a sequence of them doing the 'business' as they re-sign their contract with EMI. Instead the poster emphasises the individual activities of John, Paul, George and Ringo around the time of the collage. Ringo is shown with Ewa Aulin, his co-star from the film *Candy* (1968), and also dancing with Elizabeth Taylor (wife of his other co-star in the film, Richard Burton). Yoko appears in a self-portrait cartoon by John of the naked couple, and in an image nearby of a naked John sitting cross-legged in bed talking on the phone, as its stretched cord cuts across her out-of-focus head. A number of the photos are not easy to decipher: one such shows two men with the tops of their heads cut off, but is unmistakably Paul and John taken in Paris. Alluding to such less obvious image choices, Hamilton has said how *The Beatles* contains 'arcane touches which only The Beatles' more intimate associates were likely to smile at', and yet such details are not at the cost of the poster's legibility. At its centre is the reverse of a photograph, a gift to one of the band, bearing a lipstick imprint and a fan's devoted words: 'I love you'.

The design for *The Beatles* album is not just an artwork that uses popular culture as its subject matter, but a work of art that operates within, and communicates as and through popular culture. What it communicates is described both through the personal invitations held within the image-laden poster and the blankness that is variously frame, context and screen for an album: the live bond between The Beatles and its global community of fans.


KODAK SAFETY FILM
937A
"Foto Jäckel"
I love you
KODAK TRI-X PAN FILM
The Beatles Book
The Beatles Monthly Book
The Beatles Monthly Book
Order of the British Empire to Our trusty and well beloved Ringo Starr Esquire (Richard Starkey Esquire)
KODAK SAFETY FILM





It´s here.

...and here.


465003

Kevin Howlett

It’s Here!

22.11.1968

‘The most important musical event of the year occurs today,’ wrote William Mann, music critic of *The Times*, on 22 November 1968. ‘It is, of course, the publication of the new two-disc album from, by, and simply entitled *The Beatles*.’ Viewing the release in strictly commercial terms, the sales department of EMI Records shared this opinion. Despite a daunting range of obstacles to surmount, the long-anticipated album had to be released in time for Christmas gift buying. ‘It was decided that it was best to get the Beatles’ package out on time,’ a representative from the company told the British trade magazine *Record Retailer*, ‘as it lifts business in general and also boosts dealers’ overall trade.’

Although ‘The White Album’ was the first Beatles LP to be pressed with Apple labels, it was solely EMI’s responsibility to organise the manufacture of the records, sleeves and various inserts – and ensure the double LP reached the shops on time. *Record Retailer* summarised the company’s valiant response with the headline ‘Operation Beatle – How EMI’s Distribution coped with its biggest exercise’. Naturally, EMI’s affiliates in other countries also faced a race against the clock to meet the logistical problems of delivering the album into the hands of record buyers. By its release date in the USA, there were 1.9 million copies stacked on the shelves of the country’s record stores. It was no easy feat.

First of all, the fact that *The Beatles* was a two-disc album presented a number of challenges. It was unusual for a pop act to release a double LP and, indeed, this had not always been the plan. The *Beatles Book Monthly* edition for June 1968 excitedly outlined the group’s schedule for the rest of the year. After the rush-release of a new single, readers were told ‘the boys expect to complete an album of new recordings by August for release in September … all four Beatles are anxious to record ANOTHER LP for Xmas release!’ EMI knew by September there would be a double album. ‘We were very keen on this,’ an EMI spokesman disclosed, ‘as, although there were several successful double LPs on the market, we were sure *The Beatles* would be fantastically more successful than any other double LP.’ Colleagues working in other territories were not so confident. In a letter dated 30 October 1968, EMI Records executive, Len Wood, tried to assuage the anxieties of an executive at an Austrian subsidiary: ‘EMI Records had doubts initially … they have come to the conclusion that as it is being released just before Christmas the BEATLE fans and their friends and relatives will be prepared to pay for two records.’ Nevertheless, when, relatively, a single album cost at least three times more than it does today, a double LP was a very expensive gift. But, as Mr Wood conceded, his company could do nothing to alter the ambitious plan: ‘EMI Records had no option but to release it in the form demanded by the BEATLES.’

Final specification with EMI — GH.

THE BEATLES - PMC/PCS 7067/8

COVER DETAILS - U.K.

COVER
1. Double wallet style to hold 2 records.
2. Both records to be inserted at top of album.
3. Folded size of cover - 12¾" wide
12 5/16th" deep.
4. Seams at side.
5. Board .020 Sevencoat FBB.
6. Laminated .0008 Clarifoil all over i.e. pages 1,2,3 and 4.

PAGE 1 (Front of cover)

a. The nameplate "The Beatles"* to be blind embossed to maximum depth in exact position as indicated in layout.
b. Each copy to be numbered by automatic numbering box commencing with .0000001 Note: The seven figures will be prefixed with a full point dot positioned as near to the numbers as possible. This dot must be kept to the minimum size that will activate the trip mechanism of the numbering box.
c. Numbers to be printed in grey - colour same as second colour used in the duotones in page 3 of cover.
d. Position of numbering box as layout sheet.

* Reproduction black and white pull will be supplied.

PAGE 2 (Inside front cover)

Record credits etc. printing grey. Film negative or positive will be supplied.

PAGE 3 (Inside back cover)

4 duotone (black and grey) portraits of the artists to be printed in position as layout. 2 colour films (negative or positive) will be supplied.

PAGE 4 (Back cover)

The word "Stereo"* to be printed in grey in the top right hand corner as indicated by the layout sheet. This is the only printing on this page. No printing whatsoever on the Mono version.

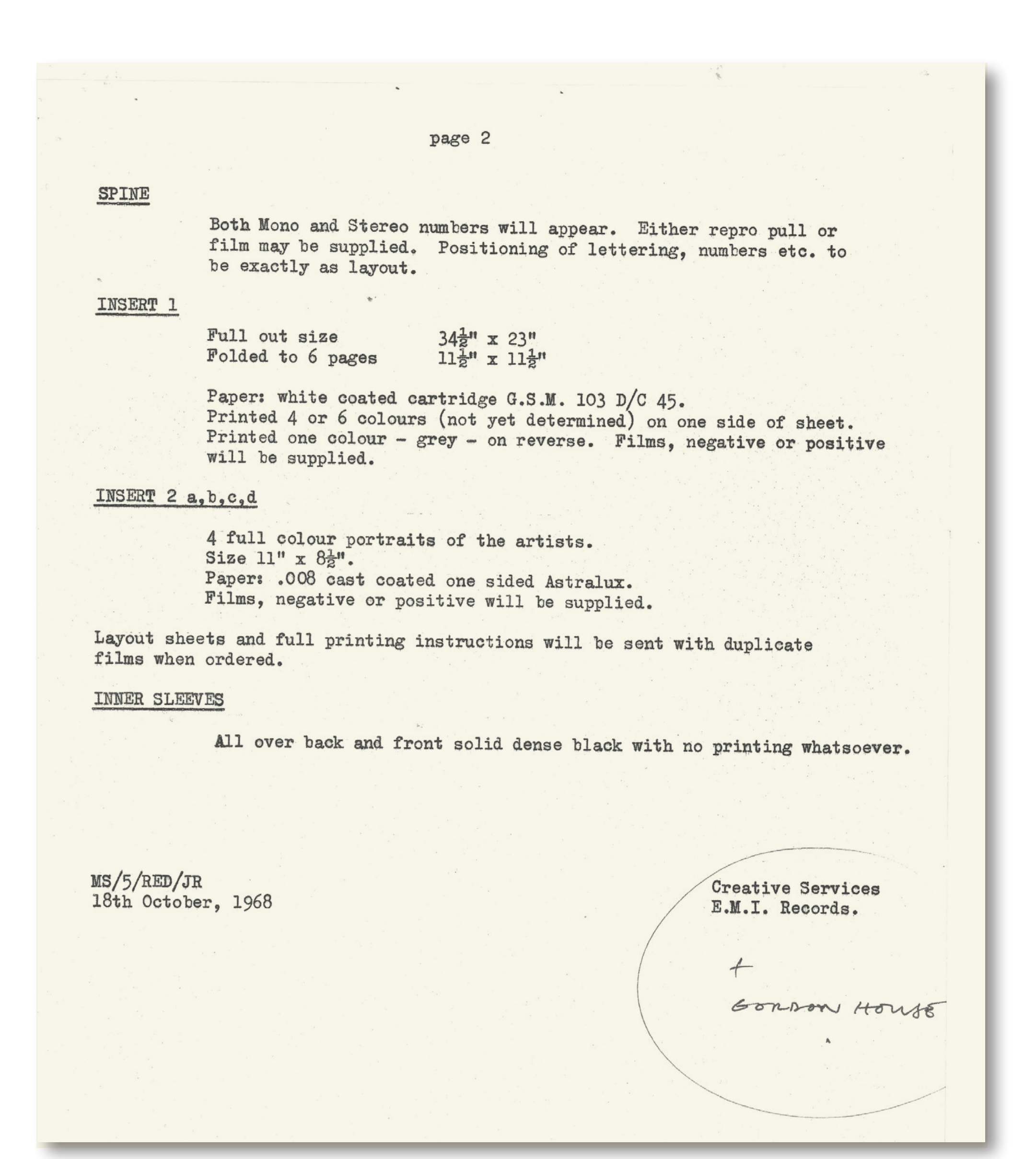
* Reproduction pull will be supplied.

Contd.

In his letter, Len Wood pointed out that EMI's business with The Beatles was unlike its relationships with other acts: 'Nothing is certain when one is dealing with such complex characters.' In 1967, for example, EMI in the UK had acquiesced to Brian Epstein's unusual request for the 'Strawberry Fields Forever' / 'Penny Lane' single to be sold in a picture sleeve and then allowed the ground-breaking artwork for *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* – despite a potential legal liability and its huge cost. In December, EMI agreed to the release of an unconventional double EP package, with a 24-page colour booklet, containing the songs from the group's TV film *Magical Mystery Tour*. As revealed in the previous chapter by Andrew Wilson, the strikingly different artwork for *The Beatles* was no less ambitious than the cover of their previous album. To carry it off, some unorthodox practices were required. For several weeks, 'Operation Beatle' was stymied by having thousands of records pressed and stored – in non-standard black inner paper bags – but with no sleeves to put them in. By 22 November 1968, 253,000 orders had been placed for the album in the UK. With only a week to go before this release date, the first few thousand sleeves arrived in EMI's factory in Hayes, Middlesex. Thereafter, 20,000 sleeves arrived each day from the printer; not enough to fulfil the existing orders. Another snag was that although EMI's machinery could insert discs automatically into single sleeves, this was not possible for doubles. Consequently, extra labour was drafted in to place records manually into the gatefolds, with openings at the top rather than the sides – another diversion from the norm.

The delayed arrival of sleeves restricted the number of records that could be distributed during the first weeks the album was on sale. Not wishing to postpone the release date, EMI chose instead to ration their supplies to shops by 40 per cent. There was a further complication. In the UK, 'The White Album' was released in two different formats – mono and stereo. At first, as there were more stereo versions available, many record dealers found their orders for mono discs replaced by stereo copies. *Record Retailer* reported that 'EMI were confident that dealers would prefer stereo versions than none at all.' In *The Beatles Book Monthly*, Mal Evans answered a query about why The Beatles had chosen to first release the album in stereo with mono LPs following later. 'We didn't!' he assured readers. 'The factories just could not keep pace with the public's demand for copies … so in some places you'd find a record shop had only stereo copies available because fewer people choose stereo and the really big demand is still for mono records.' In the USA, the album was released in only one format – stereo.

There was, however, a problem in America regarding the sound of 'The White Album' that, fortunately, was headed off at the pass just before release. On the final day of work at Abbey Road – 16 October 1968 – George had flown to the USA to work with Jackie Lomax on his debut album for Apple. Mal Evans, who accompanied him, revealed in *The Beatles Book Monthly* that while they were there 'we had a great panic about the new Beatles album.' In order to manufacture records in the



page 2

SPINE

Both Mono and Stereo numbers will appear. Either repro pull or film may be supplied. Positioning of lettering, numbers etc. to be exactly as layout.

INSERT 1

Full out size 34½" x 23"
Folded to 6 pages 11½" x 11½"

Paper: white coated cartridge G.S.M. 103 D/C 45.
Printed 4 or 6 colours (not yet determined) on one side of sheet.
Printed one colour - grey - on reverse. Films, negative or positive will be supplied.

INSERT 2 a,b,c,d

4 full colour portraits of the artists.
Size 11" x 8½".
Paper: .008 cast coated one sided Astralux.
Films, negative or positive will be supplied.

Layout sheets and full printing instructions will be sent with duplicate films when ordered.

INNER SLEEVES

All over back and front solid dense black with no printing whatsoever.

MS/5/RED/JR
18th October, 1968

Creative Services
E.M.I. Records.

+
GORDON HOUSE

USA, lacquers had been cut from copies of the master tapes at Capitol Records. As Mal explained, while mastering the album, Capitol had 'done all sorts of technical things to it … it's called "compressing" and "limiting" … if George had not heard it in time, the American LP records might have been a bit of a mess. Good job George was there on hand as it turns out.' Once George had supervised a new cut that preserved the dynamic range of the original tapes, the 33 sets of lacquers made previously by Capitol were ordered to be destroyed. Somehow a small number of over-compressed albums pressed from them escaped into stores – only to become very collectable, years later.

While The Beatles carefully controlled the sound and look of their album in the UK, alterations could sneak through elsewhere. In particular, the photo collage on the poster contained images that were troubling in some countries. A very small picture of Paul stepping out of a shower naked allowed a glimpse of pubic hair, which prompted some controversy. Enough, in fact, either to have the picture removed from the poster, as in South Africa, or the sensitive area obfuscated, as it eventually was in the USA. Apple's press officer, Derek Taylor, was saddened by such fuss: 'All this work, all this talent – and all their dirty little minds focus on is one tiny picture.' Although there was also a naked picture of John in the collage, it was his drawing of himself and Yoko that set pulses racing. In some countries, pubic hair was deemed so shocking – even as doodled in a cartoon caricature – that it was whitewashed out.

In the end, of course, it was the music that mattered most and this was almost universally well received. Writing in *The Observer*, film director Tony Palmer predicted *The Beatles* 'should surely see the last vestiges of cultural snobbery and bourgeois prejudice swept away in a deluge of joyful music making, which only the ignorant will not hear and only the deaf will not acknowledge.' A review of 'The White Album' in *New Musical Express* argued that 'What these two momentous LPs do is reflect The Beatles with Something for Everybody, representing the Gentle, the Genius, the Singalong, the Rocking – and the sheer good, bad and ugly of their work up to late October, 1968.' Despite initial worries about it being an expensive double album, *The Beatles* was an immediate bestseller. It entered the UK chart at number one and remained there for a total of eight of the 22 weeks it was listed. It topped the American chart for nine weeks of its initial run of 65 weeks. Its emphatic commercial success prompted *Record Retailer* to report that 'as their latest LP offering steadily breaks all previous sales figures, the Beatles are still kings in the field which made them famous – selling records.'

As with *Sgt. Pepper*, no singles were released from 'The White Album' in the UK and USA during the 1960s. One of the many latent hit singles on the double LP, 'Ob-La-Di, Ob-La-Da', was seized upon by The Marmalade, who were at number one in the UK by January. The Beatles were fond of another version by West Indian band The Bedrocks, which reached the British top twenty. Indeed, the wide range of material

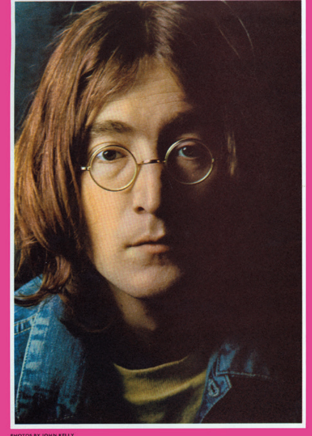
New! The BEATLES

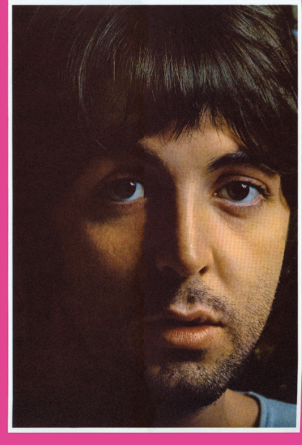
2 LP's — 30 GREAT SONGS - COMPLETE LYRICS INCLUDED

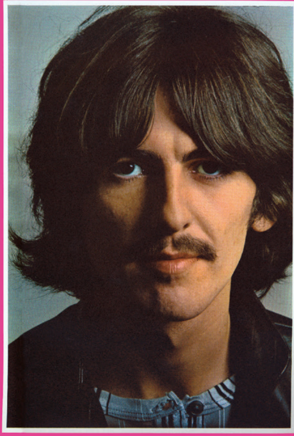
GIANT FULL COLOR 23" x 34" POSTER - FOUR 8" x 10" COLOR PHOTOGRAPHS of JOHN, PAUL, GEORGE & RINGO

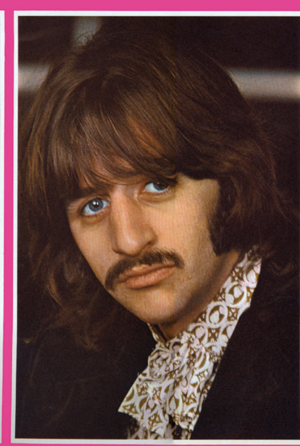
'THE BEATLES Special Double Album'

EMI











on 'The White Album' quickly registered with artists from across the musical spectrum, proving especially popular with artists from the fields of blues, soul and jazz. Within a year, Fats Domino had issued his version of 'Everybody's Got Something To Hide Except Me And My Monkey', fellow rock pioneer Chubby Checker had covered 'Back In The U.S.S.R.', and West Coast blues man Lowell Fulsom had fired up the Muscle Shoals Rhythm Section for his interpretation of 'Why Don't We Do It In The Road?'. In a lightning quick turnaround, jazz pianist Ramsey Lewis recorded instrumental versions of no fewer than ten songs from 'The White Album' with members of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Called *Mother Nature's Son*, his sophisticated LP was in shops by Christmas.

Amid the excitement generated by 'The White Album', it was confirmed in *The Beatles Book Monthly* that the group would appear in a series of New Year concerts at the Roundhouse in London. Their first live performances for over two years would also be screened on TV around the world. The magazine concluded that The Beatles 'intend to base the whole thing on their new double album with several oldies thrown in for good measure.' As documented in the film *Let It Be*, that initial concept morphed into something altogether different.

In his review of 'The White Album' in *The Times*, William Mann maintained that 'these 30 tracks contain plenty to be studied, enjoyed, gradually appreciated more fully, in the coming months. No other living composer has achieved so much this year.' In fact, those 30 tracks have continued to fascinate generations of listeners for 50 years. In that time, the album has been heard on a variety of formats – from records, cassettes and eight-track cartridges to CDs, downloads and streaming. The 1997 movie *Men in Black* has a joke that refers to the collection's apparent immortality – whatever the technology or musical fashion of the time. Agent K, played by Tommy Lee Jones shows his new partner Agent J, acted by Will Smith, a laboratory in which aliens have devised a series of useful inventions, including Velcro and microwave ovens. Holding up a minuscule disc, Tommy Lee Jones says, 'This is a fascinating little gadget. It's gonna replace CDs soon. Guess I'll have to buy "The White Album" again.'

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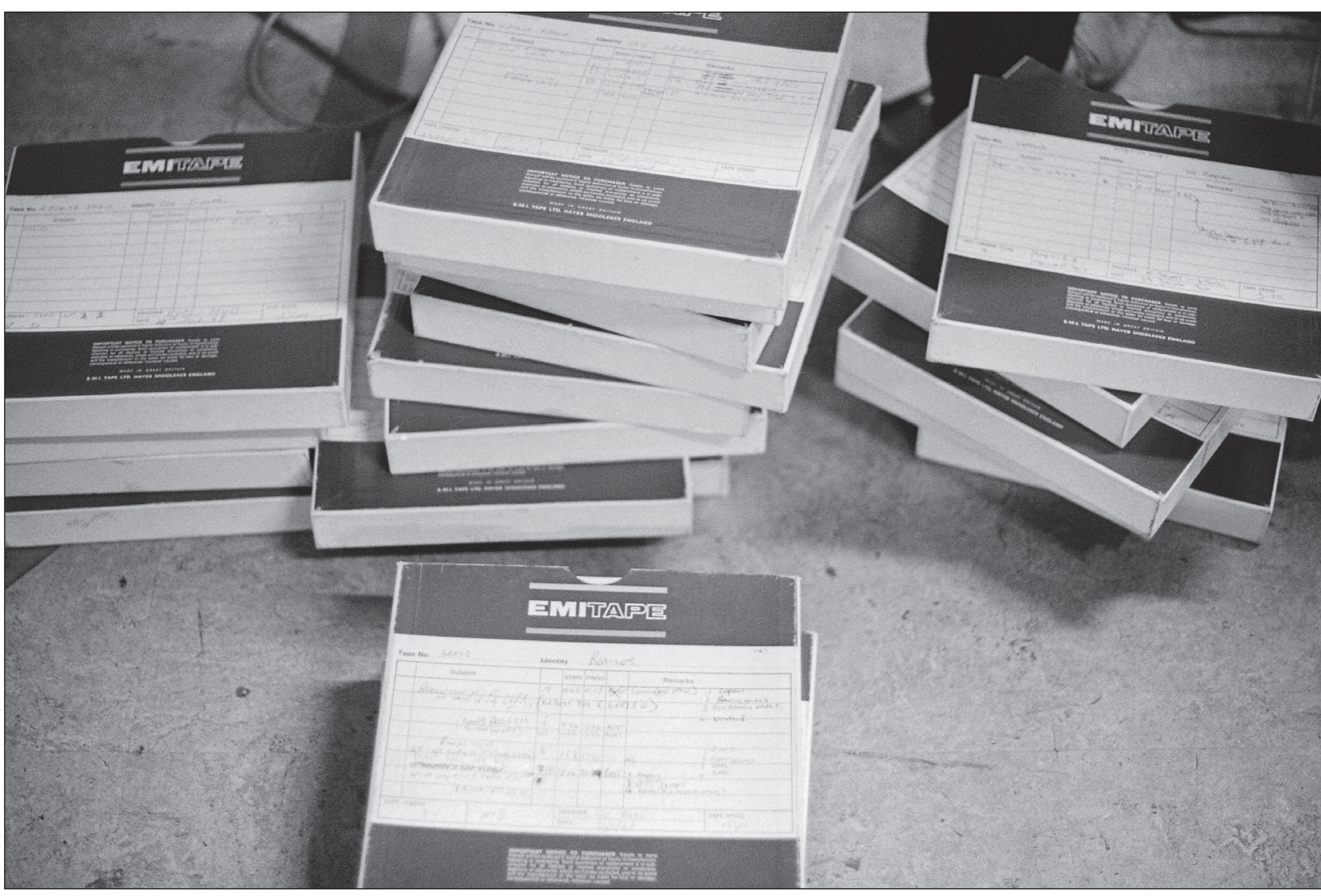


Photo by Linda McCartney

One —
The Beatles

1 Back in the U.S.S.R.
2 Dear Prudence
3 Glass Onion
4 Ob-La-Di, Ob-La-Da
5 Wild Honey Pie
6 The Continuing Story of Bungalow Bill
7 While My Guitar Gently Weeps*
8 Happiness is a Warm Gun
9 Martha My Dear
10 I'm so tired
11 Blackbird
12 Piggies*
13 Rocky Raccoon
14 Don't Pass Me By+
15 Why don't we do it in the road?
16 I Will
17 Julia

Two —
The Beatles

1 Birthday
2 Yer Blues
3 Mother Nature's Son
4 Everybody's Got Something to Hide Except Me and My Monkey
5 Sexy Sadie
6 Helter Skelter
7 Long, Long, Long*
8 Revolution I
9 Honey Pie
10 Savoy Truffle*
11 Cry Baby Cry
12 Revolution 9
13 Good Night

Three —
Esher Demos

1 Back in the U.S.S.R.
2 Dear Prudence
3 Glass Onion
4 Ob-La-Di, Ob-La-Da
5 The Continuing Story of Bungalow Bill
6 While My Guitar Gently Weeps*
7 Happiness is a Warm Gun
8 I'm so tired
9 Blackbird
10 Piggies*
11 Rocky Raccoon
12 Julia
13 Yer Blues
14 Mother Nature's Son
15 Everybody's Got Something to Hide Except Me and My Monkey
16 Sexy Sadie
17 Revolution
18 Honey Pie
19 Cry Baby Cry
20 Sour Milk Sea*
21 Junk
22 Child of Nature
23 Circles*
24 Mean Mr. Mustard
25 Polythene Pam
26 Not Guilty*
27 What's the New Mary Jane

Four —
Sessions

1 Revolution I (Take 18)
2 A Beginning (Take 4) / Don't Pass Me By (Take 7)+
3 Blackbird (Take 28)
4 Everybody's Got Something to Hide Except Me and My Monkey (Unnumbered rehearsal)
5 Good Night (Unnumbered rehearsal)
6 Good Night (Take 10 with a guitar part from Take 5)
7 Good Night (Take 22)
8 Ob-La-Di, Ob-La-Da (Take 3)
9 Revolution (Unnumbered rehearsal)
10 Revolution (Take 14 – Instrumental backing track)
11 Cry Baby Cry (Unnumbered rehearsal)
12 Helter Skelter (First version – Take 2)

Five —
Sessions

1 Sexy Sadie (Take 3)
2 While My Guitar Gently Weeps (Acoustic version – Take 2)*
3 Hey Jude (Take 1)
4 St. Louis Blues (Studio jam)
5 Not Guilty (Take 102)*
6 Mother Nature's Son (Take 15)
7 Yer Blues (Take 5 with guide vocal)
8 What's the New Mary Jane (Take 1)
9 Rocky Raccoon (Take 8)
10 Back in the U.S.S.R. (Take 5 – Instrumental backing track)
11 Dear Prudence (Vocal, guitar & drums)
12 Let It Be (Unnumbered rehearsal)
13 While My Guitar Gently Weeps (Third version – Take 27)*
14 (You're so Square) Baby, I Don't Care (Studio jam)
15 Helter Skelter (Second version – Take 17)
16 Glass Onion (Take 10)

Six —
Sessions

1 I Will (Take 13)
2 Blue Moon (Studio jam)
3 I Will (Take 29)
4 Step Inside Love (Studio jam)
5 Los Paranoias (Studio jam)
6 Can You Take Me Back? (Take 1)
7 Birthday (Take 2 – Instrumental backing track)
8 Piggies (Take 12 – Instrumental backing track)*
9 Happiness is a Warm Gun (Take 19)
10 Honey Pie (Instrumental backing track)
11 Savoy Truffle (Instrumental backing track)*
12 Martha My Dear (Without brass and strings)
13 Long, Long, Long (Take 44)*
14 I'm so tired (Take 7)
15 I'm so tired (Take 14)
16 The Continuing Story of Bungalow Bill (Take 2)
17 Why don't we do it in the road? (Take 5)
18 Julia (Two rehearsals)
19 The Inner Light (Take 6 – Instrumental backing track)*
20 Lady Madonna (Take 2 – Piano and drums)
21 Lady Madonna (Backing vocals from take 3)
22 Across the Universe (Take 6)

Blu-ray —
The Beatles
: PCM Stereo
: DTS-HD Master Audio 5.1
: Dolby True HD 5.1
: Mono

All songs : (Lennon-McCartney), * (Harrison) and + (Starkey). except *Junk* (McCartney), *Child of Nature* (Lennon), *A Beginning* (George Martin), *St. Louis Blues* (Handy), *(You're so Square) Baby, I Don't Care* (Leiber-Stoller), *Blue Moon* (Rodgers-Hart). All songs : Sony/ATV Music Publishing LLC. except *Junk* Sony/ATV Tunes LLC., *Child of Nature* Lenono Music., *While My Guitar Gently Weeps*, *Piggies*, *Long, Long, Long*, *Savoy Truffle*, *Sour Milk Sea* by Harrisongs Ltd., *Circles* and *Not Guilty* by Concord Bicycle Assets LLC., *The Inner Light* Sony/ATV Music Publishing (UK) Limited., *Don't Pass Me By* Universal Music Publishing MGB Ltd., *A Beginning* George Martin Music. *St. Louis Blues* Francis Day and Hunter Ltd., *(You're so Square) Baby, I Don't Care* Carlin Music Corp., *Blue Moon* EMI Music Publishing Ltd.



John Lennon Nov '68